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Abstract

Since the 1980s sustainability has, increasingly, become a policy goal, occurring in a variety of sectors and at a number of levels, from global to local. As a policy goal it is holistic, long term and all embracing; it lacks readily definable outcomes, such as job creation or miles of new road construction, that regeneration initiatives often require. It is characterised by ideals of 'equity' and 'democracy', and is quite different to traditional policy goals within UK government. Sustainability represents a unique challenge to many policy makers and implementers, and is often subject to discursive battles.

This thesis explores the social constructions of sustainability using the coalfield regeneration policies, practices and performances in East Durham as a focus. The emphasis is upon discursive practices and how they are embedded in social relations of power and ideology. The findings suggest that sustainability operates far from its utopian ideal. Indeed, in some cases the concepts are 'missing-in-action'. At times it was hard to find traces of sustainability where one would have anticipated the concept appearing. Conversely, there are instances where much is made of the concept in order to ground certain actions over others.

Essentially the language(s) of sustainability and regeneration are *privileged* discourses. They are used within discursive settings to legitimate a host of (in)actions. They are performed through a variety of formal and informal structures. Social power tends to lie with those actors who can use the discursive spaces and concepts. This often results in a (dis)juncture of discourse whereby those not using the privileged discourses feel dis-empowered, and sometimes adopt resistant discourses to challenge these 'normalised' discourses.

Constructions of 'Sustainability' and Coalfield Regeneration Policies

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Geography Department

University of Durham

2004

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2 0 APR 2005

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and contains nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

None of the material has previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other university.

It does not exceed 100,000 words in length.

A. J. Smith
Durham University
27th October 2004

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Abbreviations

ANT	Actor Network Theory
BCE	British Coal Enterprise
CCC	Coalfield Community Campaign
CEF	Coalfield Enterprise Fund
CIF	Community Investment Fund
Cons	Consultant (Private)
CRT	Coalfields Regeneration Trust
CTAB	Council Tenants Advice Bureau
CTF	Coalfield Taskforce
CTFR	Coalfield Taskforce Report
DCDA	Durham Co-Operative Development Agency
DETR	Department for the Environment, Transport & the Regions
DFAG	Dalton Flatts Action Group
DOE	Department of the Environment
DRA	Dawdon Resident's Association
DRCC	Durham Rural Community Council
DTI	Department for Trade and Industry
EAZs	Education Action Zones
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDBC	East Durham Business Club
EDTF	East Durham Taskforce
EmpZs	Employment Action Zones
ERA	Easington Resident's Association
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
EZs	Enterprise Zones
FG	Focus Group
GNP	Gross National Product
GONE	Government Office for the North East
HAZs	Health Action Zones
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ILMs	Intermediate Labour Markets
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
LA21	Local Agenda 21
LGMB	Local Government Management Board
NCB	National Coal Board
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
PD	Private Developer
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance Note
PRA	Parkside Resident's Association
PSO	Public Sector Officer
PSPO	Public Sector Project Officer
QPO	Quango Project Officer

Quango	Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisation
RA	Resident's Association
RDAs	Regional Development Agencies
RGS-IBG	Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance Note
SEA	Seaham Environment Association
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
SME	Small to Medium Sized Enterprises
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SRI	Settlement Renewal Initiative
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TIA	Transport Impact Assessment
TTT	Turning the Tide
TTTSG	Turning the Tide Steering Group
UDC	Urban Development Corporation
UK	Official Publications
UKOP	United Kingdom Official Publications
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
US	United States of America
VSO	Voluntary Sector Officer
VSPO	Voluntary Sector Project Officer
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WWII	World War Two

1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores the social constructions of sustainability using the coalfield regeneration policies, practices and performances in East Durham as a focus. The emphasis is upon discursive practices and how they are embedded in social relations of power and ideology, examining how some practices will give authority to certain discourses whilst simultaneously subverting others. The thesis reveals the possible implications of this 'discursive authority' for future policy and practice within the fields of regeneration and sustainability, hence contributing to knowledge and theory in this field. This introductory chapter illustrates the aims and rationale of the thesis, contextualises the research and outlines the thesis structure.

1.2 Rationale and Context

Since the 1980s sustainability has, increasingly, become a policy goal, occurring in a variety of sectors and at a number of levels, from global to local. As a policy goal it is holistic, long term and all embracing; it lacks readily definable outcomes, such as job creation or miles of new road construction, that regeneration initiatives often require (Hudson & Weaver, 1997). It is characterised by ideals of 'equity' and 'democracy' (Evans, 1997), and is quite different to traditional policy goals within UK government. Sustainable policy would suggest that 'development' and the 'environment' could be compatible rather than competitive policy goals. As such, sustainability represents a unique challenge to many policy makers and implementers, and is often subject to discursive battles. Yet research in this field has often been framed by environment and economy, with social

aspects missing. This has resulted in multiple gaps to our knowledges of the conflicts and negotiations between social inclusion, the environment and the economy (Adebowale, 2002). This thesis will help to fill this gap by providing a detailed empirical focus upon all elements and constructions of sustainability and sustainable development.

All too often sustainable development and regeneration polices have been seen as incompatible (Gibbs, 1997). In conventional 'top-down' regeneration policies, a concern with sustainability has been confined to the physical environment (Gibbs, 1997). However, sustainability can (and arguably should) also be seen as involving moves towards a more equitable and democratic society (Hudson and Weaver, 1997). Indeed, recent shifts in regeneration policy and guidance reflect New Labour's rhetorical stance and focus upon integrating the principles of joined-up Government, working in joined up ways, to deliver socially inclusive changes at the local level (Foley & Martin, 2000; Tiesdell & Allmendinger, 2000).

Sustainability and regeneration as policy goals are subject to discursive struggles. The social constructionist approach suggests that situated knowledges of these concepts, especially at the micro-scale, are contested by those involved and resultant policies and practices will reflect this discursive struggle (Myerson & Rydin, 1996b; Harrison & Burgess, 1994; Burningham, 1998). By situating an exploration of the discursive processes employed by key actors in constructing concepts of regeneration and sustainability for coalfield communities, the circuit of culture, tracking actions and rhetorical claims can be explored (Burgess, 1992; Burgess & Harrison, 1993) and reveal what discourses are employed and the

implications of this process. Hence this thesis has the following research objectives and questions.

1.3 Thesis Objectives

- to elucidate the content and concepts of regeneration policies
- to identify key actors and agencies in regeneration of coalfield areas
- to identify concepts of sustainability and the ways in which different concepts of sustainability are incorporated into regeneration discourses and policies
- to explore and explain the extent to which the power and knowledge of interest groups involved in the regeneration of coalfield communities is linked to the definition and implementation of sustainability
- to identify the policy implications of such explanations
- to develop a methodology to achieve the above objectives
- to provide further understanding of methodologies for explaining social phenomena/ relationships in space, and with relation to policy

Researchable questions derived from these objectives:

1. What are the concepts and contents of regeneration policies?
2. Who are the key actors and agencies in coalfield regeneration?
3. What are the concepts of sustainability? How are they interpreted into regeneration discourse and policy?
4. How is sustainability understood within the interest groups involved in the regeneration of coalfield communities?
5. What are the implications of this understanding?

1.4 The Thesis Structure

The main theoretical issues, which inform the objectives of the thesis, are outlined in Chapter 2, addressing the theoretical position of the social constructionist approach. Social constructionism offers a contextual and theoretical framework for examining the discursive struggles of a term. Constructionism has been deployed in context specific ways and is highlighted throughout Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework used to pursue the research agenda. The chapter provides a synthesis of the case study approach, consideration of the units of analysis and examines the overall case study design. A systematic discussion of the methods of data collection and the sources of evidence is provided, and the iterative processes of interpretation are outlined and discussed, focusing particularly on the tensions of employing a grounded theory approach and the processes of interpretation and data gathering.

The evolution of the concepts of 'sustainable development' and sustainability are examined in Chapter 4. The chapter synthesises the ways in which these concepts have drawn upon Northern environmentalism and have been shaped by critiques of development processes, analyses the popularity and mobility of the Brundtland definition, at the expense of 'other' sustainability discourses. The chapter explores the 'grand puzzle' of sustainability interpretations and discourses before considering the ways in which sustainable development is being operationalised.

Chapter 5 explores the processes by which areas, such as former coalfields, have come to face such severe economic, social and environmental issues, and the policy (past and present) that has been employed to tackle such problems. It outlines the national, supranational and global contexts that have shaped the decline of the coalfields, and framed policies aimed at regeneration. The chapter highlights the impact of these processes in the coal industry before examining the ways in which regeneration has been deployed as a 'solution' to the problems faced in areas, such as the coalfields. The chapter critically comments upon the circulation and variety of regeneration discourses.

In Chapter 6 a contextual background to the case study area of East Durham is provided, highlighting the uniqueness and commonality to the wider situational issues of decline within coalfields. In addition, background to the case study's associated embedded units of analysis is offered. This contextualisation uses traditional means of quantitative description, and a richer in-depth interpretation through use of a 'written ethnography' of the research processes and the area under study.

Chapter 7 identifies the *myriad* of players, groups, entities and objects, and their respective, and inter-related, roles within the processes of regeneration operating in East Durham. The various roles assigned and adopted within the myriad are assessed in order to facilitate the exploration of the context of social power and legitimacy within the regeneration processes of East Durham.

The concepts and contents of regeneration policies within East Durham are explored in Chapter 8. The evidence provides detailed illustrations of the main contents and concepts of regeneration initiatives; the current priorities within regeneration ethos and practice; and those who are included in, and excluded from, the processes of regeneration. The types of activities and rhetorical claims to regeneration and the ways in which the various participants in the process are constructing the main interpretations of regeneration, are critically assessed, identifying notions of holistic approaches versus small scale more piecemeal; notions of rebirth and reinvention of the area; notions of transforming local people; and issues of equity.

Chapter 9 examines how the ideals of sustainability and sustainable development have been operationalised within the regeneration processes in East Durham. The focus is upon analysing constructions of sustainability within regeneration discourse and practice in East Durham and the mechanisms via which they are enabled. There is critical engagement with the ways in which the various interest groups involved in the regeneration of coalfield communities, and specifically East Durham, understand and utilise discourse of sustainability. The main patterns of sustainability operating in East Durham, such as sustainable transport, materialisations of nature, nature conservation, lasting developments and limited sustainability, are critically explored.

Chapter 10 analyses the two main themes of the thesis: a) the social power and legitimacy that underpins the translation of slippery rhetorical concepts, such as sustainability and regeneration, into policy and practice; and b) the lived experience of industrial contraction in a former coal mining area. Here discussion generalises out from issues that have been raised within Chapters 6 to 9, to the wider meanings of the thesis 'findings' for different ways of understanding the concepts being explored. The chapter addresses the significance of the 'findings' by relating these back to the terms of thesis agenda. Theoretical and methodological issues such as difficulties with the performance of ethnography and the limits to the constructionist agenda are addressed at length.

The concluding chapter summarises the main findings of the thesis in light of the research questions (see section 1.3), and critically comments upon the thesis' contribution to theory and knowledge within geography.

2.1 Theory

This chapter outlines the main theoretical issues that inform the objectives of the thesis. The theoretical position of the social constructionist approach is explored here. Social constructionism offers a contextual and theoretical framework for examining the discursive struggles of a term (policy directive), such as sustainability or regeneration. Constructionism has been deployed in context specific ways throughout the processes of this thesis, and these are highlighted in the final section of this chapter.

2.2. What is Social Constructionism?

Social constructionism, as a theoretical concept, is difficult to define. It is open to wide interpretation when utilised as an underpinning concept for a research methodology. The aim of this section is to provide an overview of the concept; examine common definitions; applications; and comment upon the critiques of social constructionism. In addition the interpretation of constructionism that forms the contextual and theoretical framework for this thesis is discussed.

'Constructionism' is, essentially, an umbrella term. It can be used to refer to a variety of approaches to science, knowledge, sociology, media studies, the environment and so on; and has a multi-disciplinary background (Hannigan, 1995; Demeritt, 1998; Burr, 1995). Sismondo (1993:515) notes that,

> "'social construction' and 'construction' do not generally mean the same thing from one author to another."

The terms, along with 'constructivist' and 'constructivism', may be used simultaneously to draw attention to several different types of phenomena. In their edited collection on the politics of constructionism, Velody & Williams (1998) draw attention to the concerns

with the overall shape and consistency of social constructionism. Indeed Lynch (1998:22) suggests that 'constructivist' is an emblem for a "family of bastards" to band together under and use with, often, little consideration of criteria, such that no generic criteria is drawn upon by this family. To avoid such problematics within this thesis, an attempt is made to examine, and drawn upon, the commonality of 'constructionist' approaches.

The word 'construction', itself, is the pivotal aspect to the constructionist agenda (Lynch 1998: Hacking, 1998). For Lynch (1998) 'construction' can be thought of in three senses. Firstly as *unmasking*, if something is constructed (assembled or built in parts) then implicitly it can be deconstructed (disassembled or taken apart). This forms the basis of many familiar discursive encounters and settings. For instance, in a court of law or a public planning inquiry where facts are presented, allegations are made, evidence is provided and interpretations are sceptically examined. The outcome is based upon the 'deconstruction' of the discourse (verbal and written) that takes place. Secondly, the word construction can be viewed in its vernacular sense and suggests that something has been '*made-up*' as opposed to being naturally available. Thirdly, the ordinary sense of the word is related to *manufacture*, or to manipulation, of a product or outcome.

The commonality of constructionist theory and analysis is a concern with how people assign meaning to their world (Best, 1989). Social constructionists, generally, accept that;

- all ways of understanding are products of culture and history, and dependant upon the particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in a culture at a particular time;

- our currently accepted ways of understanding the world are product not of the objective observation of the world, but of the social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with each other; and
- these 'negotiated' understandings can take a variety of different forms, and we can therefore talk of numerous possible 'social constructions' of the world. However each construction can invite a different kind of action from human beings, thus some constructions of the world can help maintain some patterns of social action and exclude others (Burr,1995; Gergen, 1994)

2.2.1 Roots of Social Constructionism

The social constructionist approach draws upon a number of sources, such as literary criticism; the philosophers Foucault and Derrida; has its roots in the sociological writings on scientific knowledge of the 1970s (such as Spector & Kitsuse, 1973; Latour & Woolgar, 1979; Barnes, 1974; Knorr-Cetina, 1995, and Berger & Luckmann, 1966); and, what Burr (1995) describes, as the 'crisis' in social psychology. The aim here is not to provide a genealogy of the theoretical development, nor an in depth critique (see Lynch, 1998; Hacking, 1998; and Sismondo, 1993 for these), but to offer an outline of social constructionism and the ways in which the research methodology deployed here draws upon the concept. Of necessity this includes a review of the main critiques alongside comment upon the development of the concept.

2.2.2 Critiques of Constructionism

Constructionism has been criticised on numerous epistemological and ontological levels. The main critiques, however, surround concerns for constructionism's conceptual reduction; its relativist pretensions; and its associated tendency for unnecessary conceptual inflation (Velody & Turner, 1998). The most common attack on social

constructionism comes from the realist corner. Realists, such as Bhaskar (1993), have been instrumental in highlighting the failings of some constructionists to address issues of the *real* and constructions of knowledge in reality (Burkitt, 1998). Velody and Williams (1998) highlight the issue of 'residually real': asking what remains that is *not* constructed? The social constructionist's failure to acknowledge the 'reality' and independence of 'nature' is something this research agenda has to address. Yet this slip into relativism, and its associated relativist pretensions, can be avoided. It does not form a feature of all social constructionist agendas and it is important to ensure that an appropriate form of constructionism is drawn upon to underpin this thesis.

In examining the uses of the constructionist metaphor, Sismondo (1993:516) outlines four distinct purposes, which Demerit expands upon and describes as a typology of social constructivisms (1998:176), these are illustrated in Table. 2.1. It is the last typology of constructionism (neo-Kantian) which has drawn the fiercest critiques of the realists, and in many ways 'tarred' the other typologies with a similar brush. Burningham & Cooper (1999) highlight the importance of examining the type of constructionism that is under attack in their review of social constructionist analyses of environmental issues. They found that the majority of studies they reviewed cast no doubt upon the reality of the environmental problems. Indeed, the studies often aimed to adopt an explicit contextual perspective- a mild constructionist approach (see also Artefactual Constructivism in Table 2.1).

1. **Social object constructivism-** the construction of institutions (including knowledge, methodologies, fields, habits, and regulative ideals) through the interplay of actors. The key proponents of which are Berger & Luckmann, who first introduced the phrase 'social construction' in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* in 1966. Ontologically, socially constructed reality is distinct from objective facts given by nature, for instance the distinction between gender (a social construction) and sex (an objective fact). Epistemologically, scientific truth can be explained by nature.

2. **Social institutional constructivism-** the construction, by scientists, of theories and accounts, in the sense that these are structures that rest upon bases of data and observations. As such then scientific knowledge is true and objective because it describes the world as it in fact actually is, independent of human action.

3. **Artefactual constructivism-** the construction, through material intervention, of artefacts in the laboratory. The reality of objects of scientific knowledge is the contingent outcome of social negotiation among heterogeneous human and non-human actors. There is no absolute ontological distinction between representation and reality, nature and society; and the ultimate truth is unpredictable.
4. **Neo-Kantian constructivism-** the construction, in the neo-Kantian sense, of the objects of thought and representation. The objects of scientific thought are given their reality by human actors alone; such that nature is whatever society makes of it and the 'truth' is what the powerful believe it to be.

Table 2.1. A Typology of Social Constructivisms
(sources: Sismondo, 1993:516; Demerit1998:176)

2.2.3 The 'Mild' Social Constructionist Approach

Sismondo (1993) suggests that a 'mild' social constructionist[i] approach accepts that 'distinctly social' processes are involved in the construction of institutions, knowledges and subjective realities; and draws attention to these social processes. He describes the 'mild' approach as the most common form of constructivism (he does not use the word 'mild' as a means of belittlement). He claims that it adopts the fourth, more radical, constructivist claim yet in practice ignores it. Studies in the mild constructivist vein are useful and relatively uncontroversial, given their focus upon how 'social' reality is

socially constructed (Sismondo, 1993; Burningham & Cooper, 199). The mild social constructionist approach can be used to highlight the extent to which discourses are a result of negotiation rather than reflecting independent and autonomous realities (Haworth & Manzi, 1997; Burr, 1995; Sismondo, 1993; Turner, 1998). Indeed struggles over meaning are every bit as material as practical struggles (Gramsci, 1971). Mild (or artefactual) constructionism provides a means of transcending the relativist dead end (Demerit, 1998) by re-figuring actants (human and non-human) within a focus upon powerful and productive practices (performances).

The literature on the sociology of scientific knowledge highlights the nature of scientific 'truth' claims and suggests that scientific knowledge is not merely manufactured in a laboratory (Knorr-Cetina, 1995) but is malleable, open to debate and results from negotiations within the scientific community (Murdoch, 1997; Latour & Woolgar, 1979; Grove-White, 1991; Haraway, 1991). Turner (1998:113) describes this process as the *reproductive cycle of constructions.* Facts become embedded, stabilised, through a shared process of practices, which are acted upon between audiences and their joint actions. Turner (1998) suggests that,

> "a given body of practices attains this stability (or facts become practices through their appropriation in action) only within 'local' settings." (Turner, 1998:113)

As such scientific knowledge, like *all* forms of understanding, is 'socially constructed' (symbiotically and politically (Murdoch, 1997a)) within context specific 'networks'. Such 'networks' can include numerous *actants:* human and in-human (Bingham, 1996; Thrift,1994).

Indeed, recent work in the area of Actor Network Theory (ANT) (Bingham, 1996; Murdoch, 1995, 1997a, 1997b; Hinchcliffe, 1996) and related geographical and sociological theory (Benton, 1994; Haraway, 1991; Thrift, 1994) has highlighted the need to move away from 'human-centredness', such that we,

> "now need to talk of a new category of people/machine- the inhuman." (Thrift, 1994:197)

There has been a growing acceptance of the need to destabilise boundaries such as human and animal (nature); human/animal (organism) and machine (Haraway, 1991; Murdoch, 1997a). For Haraway (1991:150) we are all, by the late twentieth century, cyborgs- "theorised and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism". Consequently, there is a need to transcend boundaries (society-nature-technology), that are at best "leaky" (*op cit*), and explore networks and agency. Whereby every actor is also a network and an actor network is,

> "simultaneously an actor whose activity is networking heterogeneous elements and a network that is able to redefine and transform what it is made of." (Callon, 1987:93 as cited in Bingham, 1995:647)

Thus 'things',

> "Machines, texts, buildings: all of these, as well as people, come to be seen as (potentially) embodying networks, and thus (potentially) the loci of 'action'." (Bingham, 1995:647)

The focus, then , is not merely upon 'language' but performative discourses (discussed below), and as such,

> "scientific discourses can be partially understood as formalizations, i.e. frozen moments, of the fluid social interactions constituting them, but they should also be viewed as instruments for enforcing meanings." (Haraway, 1991:164)

Discourses of any concept, then, should be analysed in terms of: the claims themselves, the claims-makers, and the claims-making process (Best, 1987; Hannigan, 1995;

Burgess & Harrison, 1993). If terms acquire meaning from their function within culture (see Wittgenstein, 1953) then the main questions to be asked of any 'truth' claims are,

> "how do they function, in which rituals are they essential, what activities are facilitated and what impeded, who is harmed and who gains by such claims?" (Gergen, 1994:53)

By examining the rhetoric of a truth claim it should be possible to explore the social power and legitimacy (Demeritt, 1998; Butler, 1993) of that discourse (see Figure 2.1). Foucauldian theory suggests that discourses can be powerful in the sense that they can lead to the 'normalisation' of some ideologies and the 'abnormalisation' of others (Darier, 1999), thus legitimating some actions over others (Burr, 1995). It is also suggested that those ['that'] which are [is] 'abnormalised' may adopt 'tactics of resistance'. This action of 'resistance' and the various tactics (performative- discourses) employed form an important *agency* within the constructionist agenda, which is explored throughout the thesis.

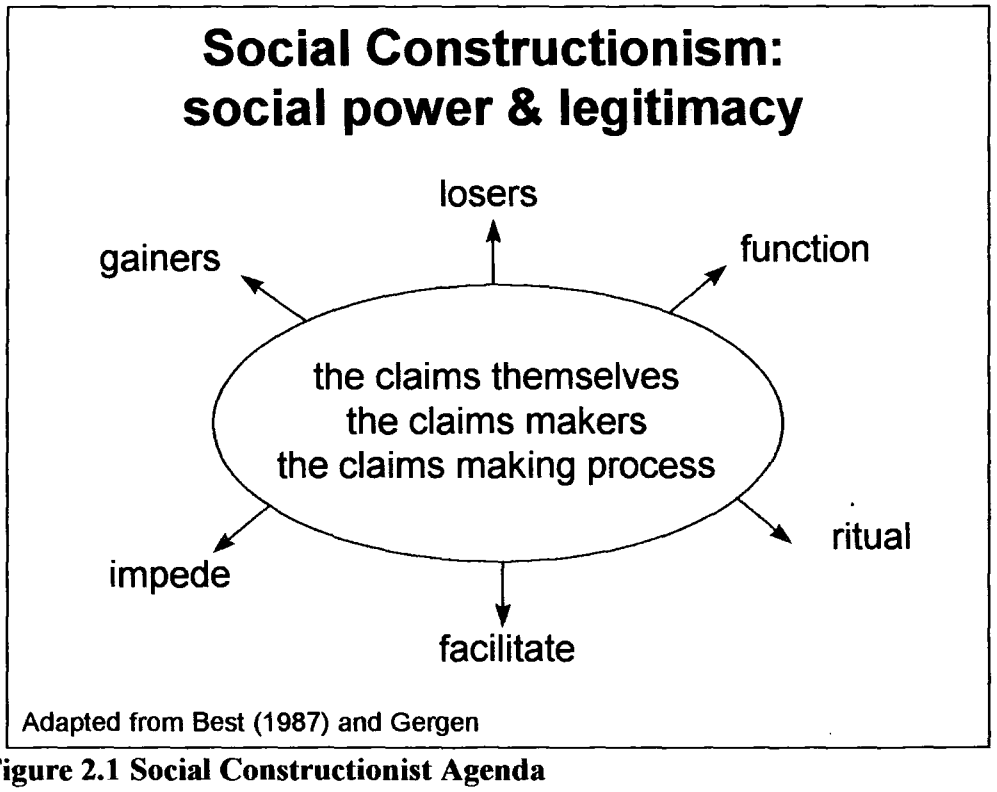

Figure 2.1 Social Constructionist Agenda

2.2.4 The Performativity of Discourse(s)

At this point it is useful to clarify the usage of the term discourse within this thesis. Those associated with critical discourse analysis/ critical language study draw attention to the function of language in society, and its associated power (Fairclough, 1989; van Dijk, 1997). Harvey (1996) suggests that the words discourse and language are often used interchangeably, yet he feels that it is,

> "useful to treat language as in some sense more fundamental, as one of the key raw materials out of which specific discourses....get shaped." (Harvey, 1996:83)

Discourse can be described at various levels of structure, such as: syntax, semantics, stylistics, rhetoric, and genres, including argumentation and story-telling (van Dijk, 1997; Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). It can also be studied in terms of its actions, as processes of production and comprehension by language users,

> "language users engaging in discourse accomplish *social acts* and participate in *social interaction*, typically so in *conversation* and other forms of *dialogue*." (van Dijk, 1997:2- original emphasis)

In this sense a discourse is fundamentally seen as being *socially constructed* (Wetherall & Potter, 1988; Fairclough, 1989). Hajer (1995) defines a discourse as a,

> "specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorisations that are **produced, reproduced, and transformed** in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities." (Hajer, 1995:44-emphasis added)

In many senses a discourse is 'performative'. And at this juncture it is pertinent to return to issues of agency and performance raised above when discussing networks. Indeed, throughout this thesis I contend that regeneration and sustainability are discursively performed rather than being simply represented through linguistic practice (Knox, 2001),

thus it is essential that I examine the ways in which language has agency, it does 'things' and works to achieve outcomes (Parker & Sedgwick, 1995). Notions of the *performative function(s) of language* are vital to an understanding of the ways in which linguistic practices are key to the constructing, shaping, moulding, resisting, blending, and asserting of regeneration and sustainability.

In this sense, Judith Butler's work has been seminal. She has highlighted the connection between power and materialisation. She suggests (much like the proponents of ANT) that by destabilising the binaries between what (which discourse) has been included/ excluded (normalised/ abnormalised) we can observe the politics of how and why 'something' has come to be excluded, as that which has been excluded is not separate or existing outside, it is also produced by "the mode of exclusion" (Butler, 1993:35&39). Within her work on gender Butler highlights how the repeated use of the same items of rhetoric leads to an accumulation of citational power through which ideas become stabilised (normalised)- she calls this process 'citationality' (Butler, 1993:12). This is of importance to the thesis' focus upon the popularity (the included/the stable/the normalised) of particular constructions of sustainability and regeneration discourse(s) over others (the excluded/the fluid/the subversive). Throughout the thesis processes and products of such 'citationality' are highlighted, and particularly drawn upon in chapters 9 and 10.

Butler further stresses the 'performativity' of words, in that they can not only name (*signify*) but also "in some sense perform and, in particular, to perform what it names" (op cit:197) (*enact*). Here Butler draws upon the work (particularly the title) of J.L.Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Austin drew a distinction between constantives and performatives- "statements that merely describe some state of affairs

from utterances that accomplish" (Parker & Sedgwick, 1995:3). Butler (1995) notes that this distinction (between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of speech) is somewhat "tricky" and not always stable. Indeed, for Butler the meaning of performance is in the coincidence of signifying and enacting- the performativity of language.

In the book "*Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*" (1997), Butler examines hate speech and suggests that a simple inspection of words alone is insufficient to decide the matter of what can be classed as a threat, or which words wound. Indeed, she points to issues of context and agency,

> "for a threat to work, it requires certain kinds of circumstances, and it requires a venue of power by which its performative effects might be materialized. The teleology of action conjured by the treat is disruptible by various kinds of infelicities" (Butler, 1997:12)

Thus a threat may work in certain contexts but not others (as a performative it might fail) or all such utterances of a particular word *could* be deemed offensive. And in the same way regeneration/sustainability may mean different things, or may be used in different ways, in different contexts for different purposes. But the imperative issue is not simply to highlight these contexts. Rather, it is to be able to explain how the context "is invoked and re-staged at the moment of utterance" (Butler, 1997:13). In doing this we should recall the notion of citationality, and that,

> "**performance**- what individuals do, say, 'act-out' - is subsumed within, and must always be connected to, **performativity**, to the citational practices which reproduce and subvert discourse, and which at the same time enable and discipline subjects and their performances. Performativity then, involves the saturation of performances and performers with power" (Gregson & Rose, 2000:441:emphasis added)

Discourse(s), as such, is(are) powerful. They have the ability to condition, but, significantly, can be conditioned themselves. Butler, for instance, maintains that an utterance, and in her example a threat, may have a future it never intended- it may be returned in a different form, defused through that return and so on. In this sense there is a distinct temporality to discourse(s). And it is through this temporality that the agency of a discourse has possibilities, such as to transform or resignify. Performers (those uttering and those receiving), then, not only have an opportunity to reproduce but can also subvert.

Within this thesis these particular understandings of the performative function(s) of language are a prime concern when considering the ways in which actants (not)formally engaged in regeneration can be conditioned by particular discourses of sustainability. Yet simultaneously such actants hold the agency with which to resist, challenge, argue or get angry. I should make it clear, however, that this thesis does not adopt a 'strong' constructionist agenda, which tends to elevate discourse as an "all-encompassing authority" (Radley, 1995:21). Its theoretical underpinnings lie with the 'mild' constructionist approach, which has engaged with relativistic critiques and suggests that there is,

> "one reality with many different epistemic and discursive positions upon it and these are created by people in relationships, and also in relationships with non-humans." (Burkitt, 1998:123)

In this sense **discourses can be performative** and be part of the constantly contested meanings within social life that involve claim, counter-claim, dispute and resistance (Best, 1987; Hannigan, 1995). Throughout the thesis the aim is to highlight this performativity of discourse(s) and ultimately explore the implication(s) of the performative function(s) of language.

2.4. Theoretical Underpinnings and the Methodological Approach

Research designs are necessarily informed by the epistemological underpinnings of the theoretical framework that generate the research focus and questions. This section outlines how the theoretical concept of social constructionism has been deployed to provide a research agenda. A social constructionist agenda, essentially, includes a concern with discursive practices and how they are embedded in social relations of power and ideology, which give authority to some discourses whilst subverting others (Fairclough, 1989; Gergen, 1994; Burr, 1995; Schoenberger, 1998). Research agendas in the constructionist mode frequently focus upon an analysis of discourses to examine the sociology of knowledge, specifically the rhetoric and context of the claims-making process (Best, 1997; Hajer, 1995). Lengthier research agendas have been suggested - see Table 2.2 (Jupp, 1993). This focus can also incorporate the theories of performativity, including ANT and performativity (see for instance Healey (1997) for use of the collaborative planning approach; Jill Grant (1994) and her use of performance in following planning disputes in Canada; and the recent work of Nicky Gregson & Gillian Rose (2000) in applying performativity to their (respective) work on car boot sales and visual art).

Given the situatedness of knowledge, the process of 'normalisation/ resistance' (as outlined above) can only be observed on a micro-scale (Haraway, 1991; Turner, 1998)). Harrison & Burgess (1994) found in their examination of the social constructions of nature in a development conflict on Rainham Marshes, that developers and conservationists, through their discursive practices, employed different constructions of nature to justify their respective positions. Burgess (1992) suggested that this could be viewed as a form of cultural politics,

> "different groups representing sectional interests are locked in struggles over the meanings and values of plants, animals and landscapes threatened by development." (Burgess, 1992:236)

The crucial issue being that the groups involved are differentially empowered. Foucauldian theory suggests that the social conditions of life can provide a suitable culture for some representations rather than others, and once a discourse has become available, culturally, it can be used in the relative interests of the powerful (Burr, 1995). The discourses of the empowered may be hegemonic whilst others remain resistant. By situating an exploration of the discursive processes and performances employed by key actors in constructing concepts of regeneration for coalfield areas it should be possible to explore the circuit of culture; tracking actions, rhetorical claims, and transformations of meanings (Johnson, 1986). This reveals what discourses of sustainability and regeneration are employed (and implicitly not employed) and by whom, within the rhetoric, practice and performance of regeneration, whilst also examining some of the implications of these claims (Butler, 1993; Castree & Braun, 1998).

Framed by a social constructionist agenda, qualitative methods such as text analysis, interviews, focus groups, and observations have been incorporated into a methodology to address the thesis' research questions (as outlined in Chapter 1). The focus being, specifically, upon discursive practices and their embeddedness in social relations of power and ideology (Demeritt, 1998).

1. What public and/or institutional discourses are important in terms of knowledge of what is 'right' and what is 'wrong'?
2. In what kinds of documents and text do such discourses appear?
3. Who writes or speaks these discourses and whom do they represent or purport to represent?
4. What is the intended audience of such writing of speech?
5. What does a critical reading of these documents uncover in terms of:
    a) what is defined as 'right' and 'wrong' and therefore what is seen as problematic;
    b) what explanation is offered for what is seen as problematic;
    c) what, therefore, is seen as the solution?
    6. What does critical reading of these documents tell us about
    a) what is *not* seen as problematic;
    b) which explanations are rejected or omitted;
    c) which solutions are not preferred?
7. What alternative discourses exist?
8. How do these relate to 'internal differentiation' within and between semi autonomous realms of control?
9. What does a critical reading of these alternative discourses tell us?
10. Is there evidence of negotiation with, or resistance to, dominant discourses?
11. What is the relationship between the discourses and social conflict, social struggle, hierarchies of credibility, order and control, and, most of all, the exercise of power?
12. Are discourses, knowledge and power pervasive or reducible to class, class conflict and struggles refracted through one source, the state?

Table 2.2: A discourse-analytical research agenda
Source: Jupp, 1993:50

2.4.1 Grounding the Theory

Throughout the empirical process it was recognised that data generation, theory and analysis were part of the same process- not discrete units of action. In inductive research approaches and empirical work, investigation of social phenomena is undertaken and theory is derived from the resultant data (May, 1997). Theory is grounded through analysis and evolves during the actual research process via a shuffling between systematic data collection and analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Research is a non-linear process, there is a constant interplay of data against theory, with modification

occurring, throughout the research process (Cook & Crang, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It is a cyclical process,

> "Through research activities.....the researcher develops tentative explanations or propositions. These are then 'tested' and revised to guide a fresh collection of data, to review the original data and literature, to appraise new literature and to form new explanations." (Bailey *et al*, 1999:173)

This process of *Grounded Theory* was initially developed in 1967 by sociologists Anselm Strauss and Barney Glasser (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It is a general qualitative methodology that allows for the developing of theory which is grounded in data (systematically gathered and analysed) (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The aim is to build theory that is 'faithful' to the area under study, and has applicable use (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It requires the use of a constant comparative method (cyclical) and invokes use of a systematic theoretical sampling strategy,

> "In grounded theory one samples events and incidents that are indicative of theoretically relevant concepts. Persons, sites, and documents simply provide the means to obtain that data." (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:193)

An appropriate methodology for this thesis, based upon the epistemological basis outlined above, incorporates the extensive utilisation of qualitative research methods. These are employed in a systematic, yet flexible manner, to explore theoretically relevant issues. A structure to the data collection process which incorporates flexibility is an essential element of the grounded theory approach, as 'discovery' is the aim (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:180). Chapter 3 provides a synthesis of the qualitative methods, and structure, employed to gather evidence for this thesis. However, comment should be made here as regards the tensions that can emerge when using a grounded theory approach.

Given the highly organic nature of the grounded theory approach to research, there is a distinct need to consider issues of researcher positionality (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). The need for managing the process in a reflexive manner is highlighted by numerous authors. For instance, Bailey *et al* (1999) suggest that,

> "Researchers come to the study with their own ideology, and as such will harbour their own interpretations of others' construction of reality." (*op cit*:173)

Indeed, the agency of the researcher must be considered throughout the entire research process when skills and emotions such as creativity, intuition and curiosity are consistently being employed. The need for clear documentation of actions at all stages of the process, often within a field record, is outlined by Strauss & Corbin (1990), who suggest that such 'theoretical memos' can,

> "Contain products of the actual coding, plus theoretically sensitising and summarising notes, and give direction for further theoretical sampling." (*op cit*:223)

Throughout the thesis the interplay of the tensions in grounded theory with the practicalities and agency of conducting research are highlighted. In particular, the problematics of approaching a topic for study with a set of research questions in mind come to the forefront of the data collection and interpretation processes.

[i] Other authors have described social constructionism along a dark and light continuum, from deterministic accounts, with no significant reference to human agency, to social action accounts, which hold little reference to the structures via which social reality is constrained (Turner & Wainwright, 2003; Burkitt, 1999; Murphy, 2002; Cromby & Nightingale, 1999)

3.1 The Case Study Approach

This chapter outlines the methodological framework and the methods employed to pursue the research agenda, as outlined in the previous chapter. A case study approach provided a structure for the qualitative methods utilised to gather evidence for the research questions of this thesis. Yin describes a case study as,

> "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context." (Yin, 1994:13)

The case study as a research strategy can be comprehensive, comprising of an all-encompassing method. Such a strategy allows for triangulation of data via multiple sources of evidence, whilst being flexible and adaptable to research needs (Yin, 1994; Hakim, 1987; Rose, 1991). For these reasons the case study approach was appropriate for this thesis as a research design, and the following sections outline its design.

3.2. Case Study Design: Units of Analysis

Case study designs require careful consideration of the units of analysis that will be involved and the sources of evidence to be drawn upon (Yin, 1994), These are, of necessity, theoretically directed (Rose, 1991; Burgess, 1984; Hamel *et al*, 1993). The central aim of this thesis is to explore constructions of sustainability and regeneration, using a methodology drawn from constructionism. A characteristic constructivist agenda, as outlined in the Chapter 2, focuses upon examining the reproductive cycle of constructions (facts, claims, and so on) and how such constructions become stabilised in a local setting (as they can only attain stability within such settings) (Turner, 1998). Thus the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis suggest a single case study, with embedded units of analysis, is the most appropriate design choice (Yin, 1994). This

single case study focuses upon the regeneration processes and policies of an area experiencing decline following a period of extensive industrial restructuring - *East Durham*.

East Durham has experienced, and continues to experience, a variety of regeneration approaches, involving numerous agencies and actors, following from a lengthy period of industrial restructuring (detailed contextual background information on the area is provided in Chapter 6). It is therefore a typical case, highly representative, and holds considerable potential explanatory power (Rose, 1991). It provides an ideal context within which to pursue the aims and objectives of this research thesis.

In addition, East Durham provided a unique opportunity for ethnographic research, which is an important part of the theoretical background to this thesis. My family have lived in East Durham for the past twelve years, and I have spent 7 of those years living with them. I have also conducted previous research and worked, on placement and voluntarily, on regeneration projects, within the area[i]. Throughout the course of the thesis I continued to live and work, on a casual part-time basis, in the area. This has proved to be of significant importance to the research process, particularly, in terms of accessing information and research settings. By 'playing' on my role as a *local* I was able to gain valuable insights and access to events that other researchers may not have. Also through my work as a research assistant[ii] I extended my observations of the area and came into contact with people who subsequently proved instrumental to arranging interviews or focus groups. Drawing upon my 'insidedness' was not, however, without problems nor undertaken without recourse to reflexivity. Chapter 11 examines how 'I', and my intersubjectivity, influenced the research process.

East Durham, given its historical legacy of de-industrialisation, provided ample scope for selecting appropriate embedded units of analysis within a grounded theory approach. As outlined in the previous chapter this allows for an inductive study, whereby,

> "one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge." (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:23)

The research field process began with a concern for the general area of study: East Durham as a whole. Evidence was gathered of past and current regeneration initiatives, alongside policy for economic development, land use planning and sustainable development. This evidence provided an initial base of relevant issues. The aim was to explore current issues, performances and discursive conflicts, in context to the historical and cultural development of previous initiatives.

The chosen embedded units of analysis are illustrated in Figure 3.1. The units[iii] include an examination of a,

- Public Planning Inquiry of a proposed out of town retail and leisure development (Dalton Flatts)
- Single Regeneration Budget Round 5 project (Parkside)
- 'flagship project' of the East Durham Taskforce- the Turning the Tide project (TTT)
- 'flagship project' of the East Durham Taskforce- the Settlement Renewal Initiative (SRI)

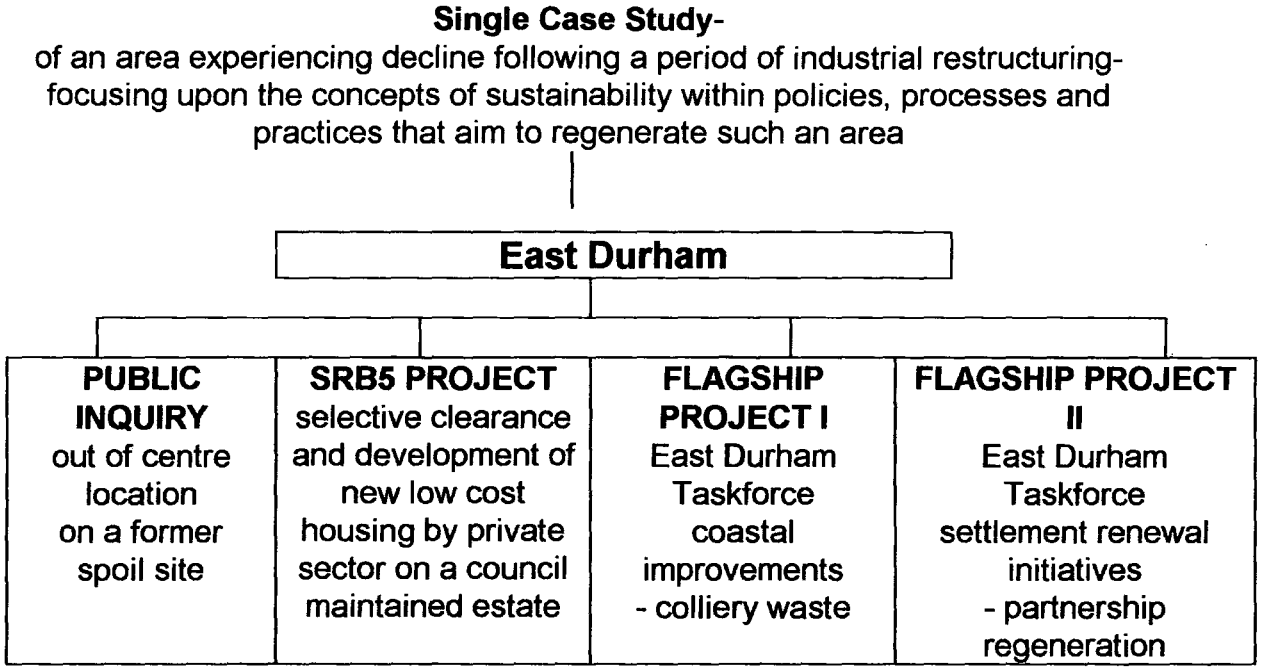

Figure 3.1 Case Study: units of analysis

Whilst a detailed description and justification for the choice of each of these units is provided in Chapter 6, it is pertinent to provide comment here on the ways in which the 'relevance', to coin Strauss & Corbin's term, of these units to the thesis emerged. The period of evidence collection extended from April 1999 to October 2000. Within this time frame there was a chronology, sometimes overlapping and sometimes discrete, to pursuing the units of analysis (illustrated in Figure. 3.2). In some instances this was due to the timeliness of each case. For example, the 'relevance' of first three units of analysis emerged from debates and conflicts that were occurring within the real time frame of the thesis. The public inquiry into the Dalton Flatts site began in May 1999 and this provided an ideal opportunity for evidence collection, that would be entirely pertinent to addressing the research questions posed by the thesis. In addition, the conflicts occurring within other units were explored in-depth (see Chapter 6 for details).

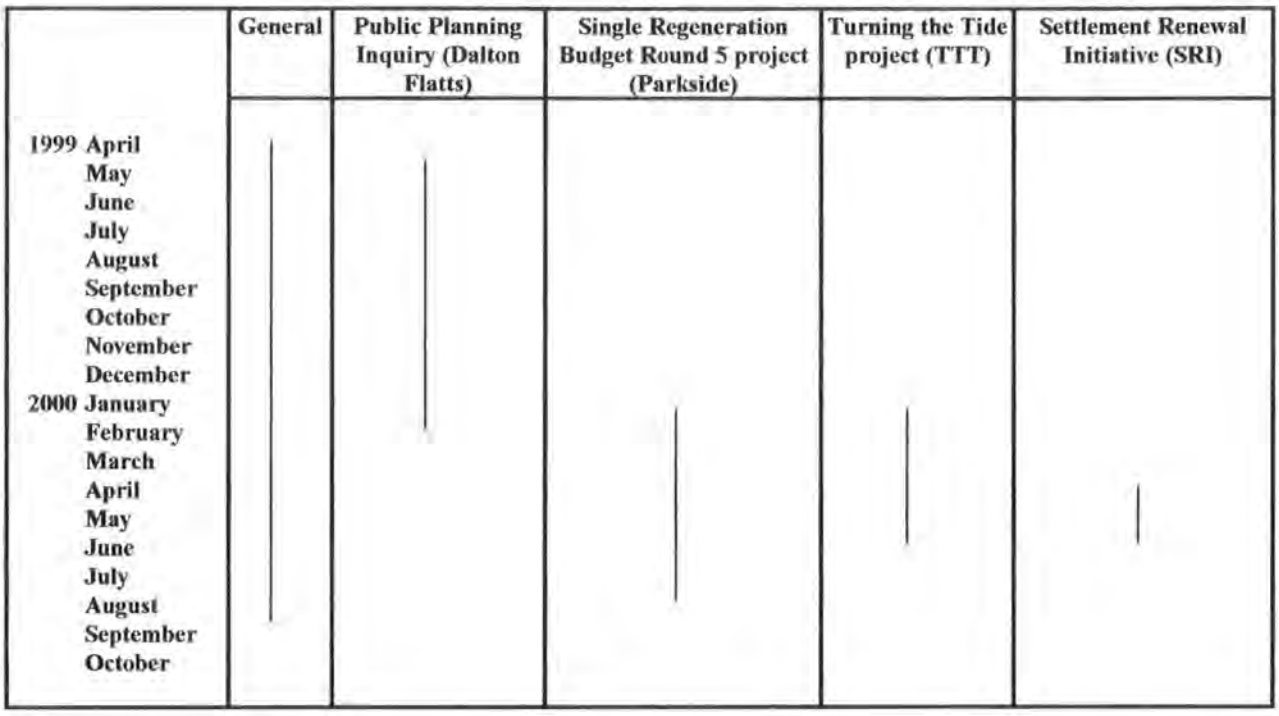

Figure. 3.2 Field Evidence: A Chronology of Collection

The only unit of analysis which was pre-determined was that of the Settlement Renewal Initiatives. The choice of this unit of analysis is based upon my previous work within this area: my placement and research on the first Settlement Renewal Initiative in 1992 provided an ideal opportunity for an ethnographic approach to be explored. This was particularly important with gaining access to interviewees, and their more candid responses in light of familiarity with me. This process was not without its problems, not least of which included the tensions of using a pre-determined unit of analysis within a grounded theory framework.

3.2.1 Ethnography

Ethnography plays a central role within this thesis. The aim of this section is to establish the broad themes of ethnography; commenting briefly upon its historical development, and associations with the social constructionist agenda. The generic

thrust of all ethnographic approaches is the aim to understand parts of the world as they are understood in the everyday lives of people who 'live them out' (Cook & Crang, 1995). This is done using participant observation, whereby the researcher spends time observing and interacting with a group (Herbert, 2000). Agar suggests that,

> "Ethnographers set out to show how social action in one world makes sense from the point of view of another. Such work requires an intensive personal involvement, an abandonment of traditional scientific control, an improvisational style to meet situations not of the researcher's making, and an ability to learn from a series of mistakes." (Agar, 1986:12)

This description implies a role for the ethnographer as an 'outsider', who can observe 'insiders'. The earliest researchers to favour this form of observational work were anthropologists. Tedlock (1991) suggests there are four archetypes of anthropologists: the amateur observer, the armchair anthropologist, the professional ethnographer and the 'gone native' fieldworker. She suggests that the amateur accounts of eighteenth and early nineteenth century explorers, travellers, doctors, colonial officers, missionaries and so on, provided the materials of the late nineteenth century anthropologists. It was not until after the First World War that academically trained ethnographers started to undertake fieldwork and provide ethnographic accounts (Tedlock, 1991). Silverman (1993) suggests that observational work in sociology emerged through the work of the 'Chicago School' in the 1930s, with, perhaps, one of the seminal ethnographic works being William Foote Whyte's 'Street Corner Society' (Whyte, 1989).

Ethnography, and anthropology, has undergone a cultural shift, particularly in light of poststructural, feminist, and postcolonial critiques (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Marcus and Fischer, 1986; Sangren, 1988; Wolf, 1996). Concerns to destabilise and address the binarisms of insider/ outsider; in the field/ out of the field; and the role of the researcher have become common. Tedlock (1991) describes this as a methodological shift from participant observation to observation of participation, such that writing an ethnography has become more concerned with presenting the 'self' and 'other' within a single narrative, as opposed to the early anthropological accounts which often ignored this intersubjectivty.

Ethnography, that addresses these critiques, can have an important role in any constructionist agenda. It aids the researcher in the process of exploring everyday life to reveal how particular discourses are performed and circulated (Herbert, 2000). The sociology of scientific knowledge studies of the 1970s used ethnographic methods to explore the production and embedding of scientific knowledge within the laboratory and wider scientific community (Latour & Woolgar, 1979). Ethnographic and social constructionist approaches are highly compatible, in that they can enable an unmasking of the larger stories that may have become hidden through routine and partial use, or suppressed and ignored (Turner, 1998). This can be done by identifying the main narrative elements in the story, which requires that careful attention and interpretation be given to issues in historical and local context (Hacking, 1998; Turner, 1998; Johnson, 1986).

Ethnography is essentially a form of interpretation or, as Clifford Geertz (1973) influentially suggested, 'thick description'. By utilising an ethnographic framework a

researcher can come to better understand the binaries of social structures and human agents, specifically how they evolve in an everyday context and within spatial specifics (Clifford, 1986; Katz, 1994). For instance, Cindi Katz suggests that,

> "a re-visioned ethnography offers the possibility for travelling intellectually and strategically between the macrological structures of power- that is, the global processes of capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy- and the micrological textures of power played out in the material social practices of everyday life." (Katz, 1992:500)

In terms of 're-visioned' ethnography, here Cindi Katz is referring to a reconstructed ethnography, in light of critiques, such that more 'multivocal' accounts of the world are produced (Katz, 1992:505). This should be achieved by giving greater consideration to issues of power and control, issues of researcher positionality and intersubjectivity (examined in Chapter 10.3). The incorporation of an ethnographic methodology within this thesis is sensitive to these issues and is explored throughout this chapter. Particular attention is given to this issue within the following discussion of evidence gathering.

3.3 Sources of Evidence

The highly empirical nature of a case study requires the use of different methods, in order to collect various kinds of information and to make observations from (Hamel *et al*, 1993). Multiple sources of evidence were gathered from: documentary sources; archival records; interviews; observations; and physical artefacts (following Yin, 1989). Figure 3.3 illustrates the triangulation and interpretation of these sources within this thesis, whilst Table 3.1 provides an example of the combined sources of evidence used within one unit of analysis.

3.3.1 Documents & Archival Records

A literature review of the concepts of sustainability and regeneration generated secondary data to further inform theory (see Chapters 4 & 5). Documents, in general, can be of prime importance to the social constructionist research agenda. Hajer (1995) illustrates how various actors, from a variety of backgrounds, join together in, what he terms, discourse coalitions, to produce policy documents on acid rain. They are able to communicate due to their discourse coalition; they find a common ground. All documents are products of a social act, the writer has an audience in mind and a purpose for her[his] document, the text will be dependent for its meaning from the discursive context within which it appears (Burr, 1995; Burgess & Harrison, 1993). Written text is socially constructed, as with any form of discourse,

> "whenever people speak or listen or read, they do so in ways which are determined socially and have social effects." (Fairclough, 1989:23)

Documents are used within this thesis in three ways. Firstly, they enabled early emergence of issues of 'relevance', by providing a general background to the past and current state of regeneration and sustainability initiatives in the area, thus guiding the choice of units of analysis. Secondly, they provided information for sampling strategies. Thirdly, the documents themselves were collected and analysed as part of the research process.

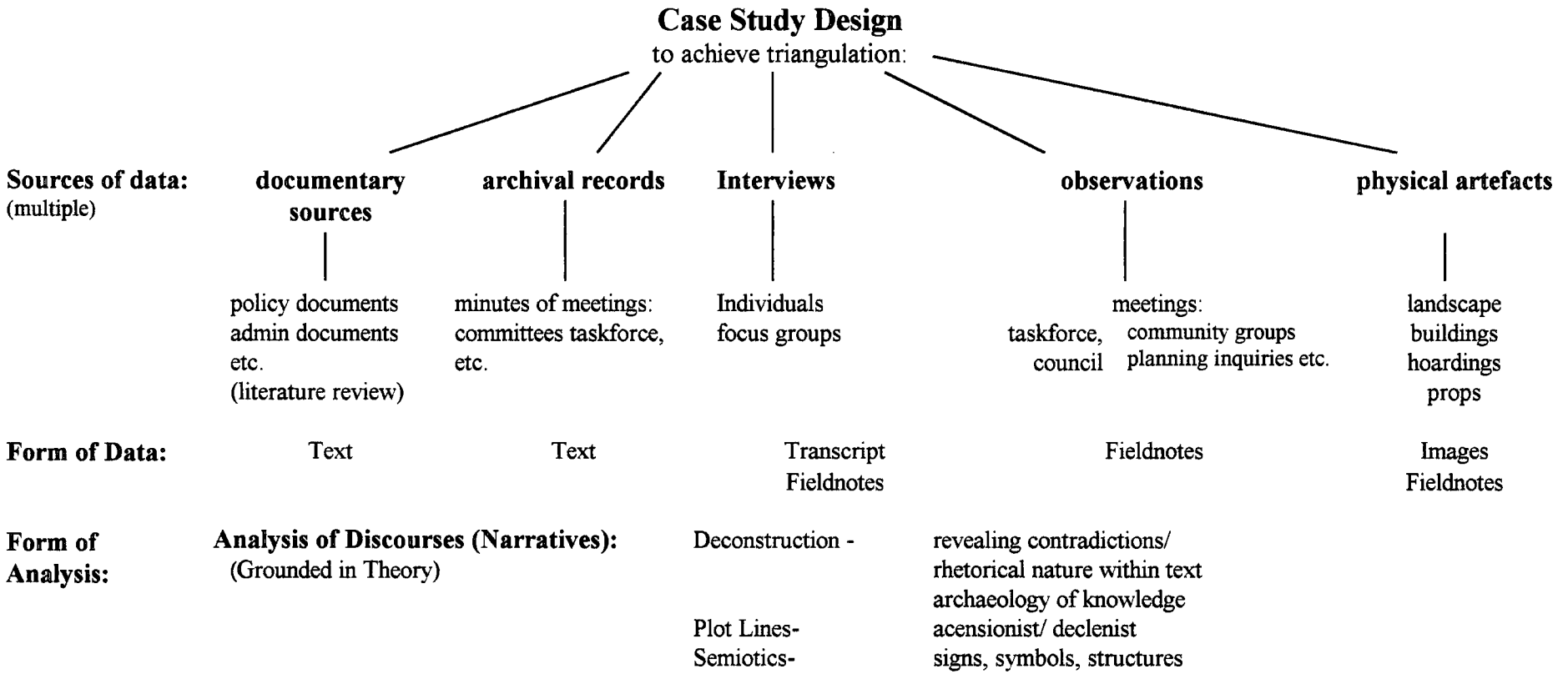

Figure 3.3. The Case Study as the Research Design

Source	Description
Documents	• planning policy guidance notes • regional planning policy • command papers • acts of parliament • consultation papers • local plan • structure plan • proofs of evidence • 'core' documents from public inquiry • publications of local action group • coalfields task force report • newspaper reports • letters of correspondence
Archival Records	• developer's application for planning permission • impact assessments- conducted by consultants on behalf of the developer • minutes of meetings- local council (decision to grant planning permission) • reports- local council reports to committees • media- newspapers and television reporting of the development (national and local)
Interviews	• key players - stakeholders, as identified from observations, documents and archival records, 8 in total, plus a number of informal telephone conversations • focus group- the local action group
Observations	• local planning inquiry - May 18th - 28th 1999 • public meetings
Physical Artefacts	• hoarding erected on A19(T) which states the interests of the local (public) action group • the inquiry hall • the site itself • other shopping centres referred to in the inquiry (e.g. Peterlee)

Table 3.1 Sources of Evidence: the Dalton Flatts unit of analysis

Documents used included policy documents and general 'grey' literature[iv]. In addition, media coverage of events[v] and archival records, such as minutes of committee meetings, were collected, where appropriate, for analysis. The use of documents in the Dalton Flatts unit of analysis, for instance, is highlighted in Table 3.1. Access to documents throughout the research process was, however, problematic[vi] and all instances of information gathering were recorded in the field record, and, thus, subsequently emerged within the interpretation process.

3.3.2 Interviews and Focus Groups

In order to gather in-depth evidence that addressed the central agenda of this research thesis, namely exploring and identifying those involved in the claims making process; upon what grounds claims are made; to whom they are made; and what such claims attempt to achieve (Best, 1987); a considerable amount of qualitative data was required. Interviews and focus groups were particularly central to the evidence gathering process, as they aim to,

> "expose differences, contradictions and, in short, the complexity of unique experiences." (Bennett, 2002:151)

The main forms of interviews used throughout the case study process were semi-structured interviews with individuals and focus group interviews with pre-existing groups (see Figure 3.3). The essential difference between interviews and focus groups is that the former generally involve only the researcher and the interviewee, although others, such as colleagues of the interviewee, may be drawn into the interview. Focus groups are based upon the principle of the researcher and a *group* of individuals engaged in discussion. Common to both, however, are issues of power, control and

structure, which are explored below. In addition to interview and focus groups a number of informal telephone conversations were also conducted. Extensive field records were kept throughout this process. The following sections provide an account of the organisation and management of the interviews.

3.3.2.1 Interviews

The role of interviews in qualitative research has been well documented (Fielding, 1993; Silverman, 1993; Burgess, 1984). Interviews are particularly useful for revealing people's experiences, opinions, aspirations, attitudes and feelings (May, 1997). As part of this research design, they are essential in exploring the ways in which the various actors construct their claims to regeneration and sustainability within the spectrum of regeneration in East Durham. Whilst document and archival records illustrate the claims made for regeneration and sustainability, the ways in which these claims are played out, performed, within East Durham are of prime concern to this research. Within a constructionist and ethnographic research agenda, the interview is not seen as a discrete event but as part of a broader context. The interview does not reveal the 'truth' of a described event but explores the interviewee's perception of, and participation in, that event.

The literature on interviews outlines the numerous formats that interviews can take (May, 1997; Silverman, 1993; Fielding, 1993). They range from highly structured, interviewer led, affairs to unstructured conversational type encounters between interviewer and interviewee (Wilson, 1996). Some commentators suggest, however, that the division between these methods is somewhat false (Hammersley & Atkinson,

1995). There are always degrees of structure to an interview and these are generally (although not always) set by the interviewer; for instance,

> "it is the interviewer who changes the subject, asks clarifying questions, refers back to something said earlier, and finally ends the interview." (Wilson, 1996:117)

The following section deals specifically with the format(s) of interview undertaken in this thesis.

Type of interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key actors in the regeneration processes of East Durham. This form of interview was chosen as it offered the possibility of an open exchange between researcher and the interviewee, allowing both to describe and explain issues in their own words; and sometimes to diverge to issues that seemed more compelling during the course of the interview (Silverman, 1993; Valentine, 1997). This is an important theoretical and empirical aspect within the social constructionist and ethnographic research agenda.

The form of interview adopted could, however, be described as a hybrid of semi-structured and non-standardised, given definitions such as these,

> "**semi-structured**- where the interviewer asks certain, major questions in the same way each time, but is free to alter their sequence and probe for more information.
> **non-standardised**- here the interviewers simply have a list of topics which they want the respondent to talk about, but are free to phrase the questions as they wish, ask them in any order which seems sensible at the time and even join in the conversation by discussing what they think of the topic themselves." (Fielding, 1993:135-6 my emphasis)

The format with which I conducted the interviews tended to range between the two forms described above. When the interviews were at their 'best' I was able to engage with the interviewee in a fluid conversation, having set out my broad interests at the beginning of the interview and allowing issues that I wished to explore to emerge 'naturally', but if necessary prompt for the issues by returning to certain comments or introducing them at suitable points. This also allowed for the theoretical aspect of grounded theory to play an important role as the interviewee was able to bring into the conversation issues that I might not have considered nor heard before. At their 'best', then, the interviews provided evidence in an inductive framework.

When the interviews were 'less than best' they were conducted in differing formats. For instance, on occasions I had to revert to a more structured approach and ask a series of questions in order to elicit responses. The reasons for this more staccato form of response from the interviewee generally resulted from a lack of interest on the part of the interviewee; limited interviewee knowledge or experience of the topic; or, poor interviewer introduction. There were also occasions when an interviewee dominated conversation, and I had very little input. Indeed, on one occasion the interviewee talked *'at'* me, delivered information that he felt I should have or felt I should want, for over an hour before I could say *anything*. The ability, however, to adopt flexibility in approaching the structure of interview resulted in a broader and richer experience of evidence collection.

Interview Recruitment & Sampling Strategy

Interviewees were selected via a combination of identification from documents, observations and the method of snowballing (Valentine, 1997). Within the SRB5 unit of analysis, for instance, I met individuals at public meetings (sometimes unrelated to the SRB5 project) who I later arranged to interview. In turn they suggested further contacts who might be useful to the thesis. Documentary sources were used to identify those in key roles on the SRB5 project- this helped to mitigate against the issue of 'gatekeepers'. In some instances there were individuals who had the power to grant or withhold access to people or situations (Burgess, 1984). Those suggesting other interviewees for me to meet with may have chosen, or withheld, such people for specific reasons. The criteria for interviewee selection for each unit of analysis is provided in Chapter 6.

In total 43 interviews were conducted, ranging in length from 30 minutes to 2 hours. The length was often dependant upon the availability of the interviewee and, as noted above, their degree of knowledge and experience, alongside interest, of the issue being discussed. The interviewees came from the wide spectrum of regeneration processes in East Durham and included land developers, local government officers, quango officers, project officers, solicitors, local activists, community development workers, and private company employees. Generally interviewees were initially approached via telephone but on some occasions via letter (see Appendix 1 for sample letter), with myself explaining that I was researching regeneration in East Durham (I offered more information if pressed- see below). Overall, the sampling strategy aimed to ensure representitiveness. When the snowball reached maximum capacity (saturation), such

that I had interviewed all those recommended or that I felt I was receiving the same information in a similar format[vii], then the interviewing (and indeed the fieldwork as a whole) ceased.

Interview Settings

The interviews often took place at the interviewee's place of work, normally in their offices or public meeting rooms. On one occasion an interview was conducted on a park bench in a village green, due to time and locational constraints on both myself and the interviewee. Details of all research settings were logged in the field record. These included the room location and set out; position I was asked to occupy; position the interviewee occupied; whether the interviewee met me personally or had someone take me to their room, and so on. These issues are all highly pertinent to the themes of power and control that run throughout any field research experience of interviewing, and require addressing at the interpretation stage.

Recording the Interviews

Detailed field records of each interview 'experience' were recorded. In addition, the majority of the interviews were taped, with the consent of the interviewee, and fully transcribed. In some instances the interviewee would need considerable assurances that the transcript and recording was solely for research purposes. In some extreme cases I was unable to elicit permission for the tape recorder to be used. This occurred twice during the interviewing process of the SRB5 unit of analysis. On these occasions I made detailed notes during the interview then reviewed and edited them immediately afterwards.

Interviews were recorded using a standard audio tape dicta-phone, with attached external microphone. The quality of recording was acceptable for the purposes of transcription and general playback. Interviews (and focus groups) were recorded using this equipment in order to encourage interaction between myself and the interviewee (May, 1997). With the knowledge that the dicta-phone was capturing the detail of the interview I was able to listen and interact with the interviewee, in a natural conversational style (Valentine, 1997). On occasions, where permission for recording was not forthcoming, and note taking was adopted, the interview took a far more formal tone, with the interviewee pausing to allow me to take notes, and even dictating.

Moderation and Structuring of Interviews

For each interview a schedule of questions/ list of topics to be explored was prepared, see Appendix 2 for sample schedule. This was informed by an initial examination of documents and observations, but also previous interviews and focus groups (in such a way theory emerged from the data). Often the issues I wished to explore emerged during the natural course of conversation around the theme of the interview. By adopting this flexibility to interview format, such that sometimes I found it necessary to be more structured than others and vice versa, rich and varied transcripts emerged. This process of 'grounding' the data was, however, problematic. The choice of interview questions was largely dictated, from the outset, by the thesis framework and questions. It would have been in-appropriate to enter an interview without having a mind to my overall research questions. These tensions in grounded theory and the

practicalities of research were noted within the field record and will be explored in Chapter 10.

3.3.2.2 Focus Groups

In addition to the semi-structured interview, the *focus group* approach formed part of the research design. Focus groups can also produce data which is expressed in the respondent's own words and context. Kitzinger & Barbour (1999) suggest that focus groups are,

> "invaluable for examining how knowledge, ideas, story-telling, self-presentation and linguistic exchanges operate within a given cultural context." (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999:5)

As such they are highly suitable to this research agenda and provided further triangulation to the research design.

Whilst not 'natural' in setting or situation, focus groups are more sensitive to emic categories of knowledge and generate data based on concepts and meanings of everyday life (Goss & Leinbach, 1996; Morgan, 1997). With an audience of peers it is suggested that participants are more likely to describe their experiences in locally relevant terms, rather than attempt to impress or please the researcher, or use discourses that they believe the researcher might employ (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Also, they are valuable for,

> "individuals whose views you wish to elicit, but who protest they do not have much to say on the topic in question." (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999:10)

This is especially important when working with local community groups who may be apathetic to the processes of regeneration, or even research, as became evident throughout the fieldwork process.

Type of group

The focus group approach has become very popular in marketing and political arenas. It usually involves several groups meeting, on a number of occasions, for,

> "carefully planned discussion[s] designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non threatening environment. It is conducted with approximately 7 to 10 people." (Krueger, 1994:6)

Kitzinger & Barbour (1999) suggest, however, that any group discussion can essentially be deemed a focus group so long as the researcher is moderating the discussion.

Given the growing popularity of the focus group approach there are numerous, didactic, 'how to' guides. Most of these guides are aimed at the market research field (Morgan, 1998a; 1998b). Whilst a considerable number of social scientist researchers make use of focus groups as a research tool, there is a distinct lack of literature that deals with the specifics and mechanics of how these researchers run their focus groups (Bennett, 2002a). A particular exception to this is the work of Burgess *et al* (1988a; 1988b). They describe the use of psychotherapeutic traditions, particularly Group Analysis, within their focus group design and management (Burgess *et al*, 1988a). They distinguish between groups which meet once-only,

> "where the interpersonal relationships of the members are secondary to the discussion of the

> product or the stimulus material." (Burgess *et al*, 1988a:311)

and the in-depth small groups that meet on several occasions over the course of weeks or months, where conversely the central concern is with the interpersonal relations of the group in context to the content of the conversations produced by them. Burgess *et al* (1988a) argue that the in-depth small groups are appropriate to their work, which explores meanings of open space, because they required participants to explore deeply held values about the environment. In-depth groups were considered for this research thesis, however, the difficulties involved with recruitment of focus groups in general, as highlighted by Bennett (2002a), played a significant factor in the choice of group type.

Whilst researchers may give significant consideration to the type of group, recruitment, membership (socio-economic heterogeneity or no-heterogeneity), numbers, settings, and so on, there exists a 'practicality barrier': people may simply not want to be involved or are unable to become involved. The reasons for this lack of involvement are, in themselves, interesting to a researcher. There may be, for instance, cultural barriers; in certain environments there may be a history of non-participation or even discouragement of participation, as Lily Kong (1998) found during her research in Singapore. Whatever the barriers, the resultant situation may mean that finding any group of people willing to participate in research is, probably, more important than adherence to rigidity of method. Kong (1998) suggests that, due to some of the innate difficulties associated with getting groups to come together at all, multiple meetings would be hard to maintain. Given this, and the initial experience of recruiting groups, it was felt prudent to use once-only groups for this research thesis. A series of once-only

focus groups were run with a number of pre-existing groups, ranging in size and composition. The following sections outline the focus group process as it was conducted.

Recruitment & Sampling Strategy

Pre-existing groups were chosen as the basis for the recruitment process, due to the difficulties associated with recruitment (as outlined above), but also because these groups are,

> "the networks in which people might normally discuss (or evade) the sorts of issues likely to be raised in the research session and ..... in which ideas are formed and decisions made." (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999:9)

The groups interviewed were locally based with a remit of working towards, or contesting, regeneration activities in East Durham. Such groups have been established either by local government, for instance the New Thornley Steering Group (see section 8.2.4), or through community activist work, such as the Dalton Flatts Action Group (see section 6.5.2).

Initially it was envisaged that focus groups would be recruited for each of the four embedded units of analysis, see Figure 3.1, and discussion would focus upon these units but also broader themes within the area. It became evident, however, that such groups would be restricted in terms of themes and locations. For instance, the focus within the Turning the Tide group was essentially on the coastal project and not necessarily other issues within Easington or the District. Groups to deal with more *generic* district wide and locale issues were also required. Table 3.2 and Figure 3.4 illustrate the ten focus group interviews conducted, including their location and

organisational issues. The groups reflect a cross section of the types of groups involved in regeneration activities across the district.

Recruiting these groups was difficult, due largely to 'gatekeepering' and issues noted above. Many of the groups were formal affairs with set agendas, constitutions and specified roles for members. With such groups it was essential to follow protocol and initiate access through the group secretary or chair. A list of local regeneration steering groups[viii] was obtained from the District Council. Groups were selected from this list and approached via a letter in the first instance (see Appendix 3), and followed up by attendance at a formal group meeting. Sometimes group secretaries/ chairs simply did not respond to letters. Focus groups for the embedded units of analysis were easier to recruit, given their desire to be 'heard' within their respective struggles. Details of recruitment for each group can be found in Table 3.2.

Group Size and Composition

Given that initial contact with the groups was often via the chair or secretary (or in the case of the SRIs the project manager) it was possible for these individuals to exert a considerable amount of control, acting as 'gatekeepers'. They had the power to retain, pass on or transform information. If recruiting group members, they had the choice of who to include/exclude. I rarely had an input into group composition, other than to suggest group sizes. This, however, does not affect the research agenda, as 'who' was invited to attend, or 'who' invited themselves, often proved to be an important element of the research evidence.

Focus Groups	Pre- existing Group	Recruitment	Size & Composition	Setting	'Focus'/ stimuli utilised
All Units/ general	*Shotton Colliery*- community partnership (Shotton 2000 Partnership)	Initial Letter to group secretary, followed by attendance at a group meeting to explain purpose of focus group work and establishment of separate meeting for focus group	1 male 6 female mean age: 45	Shotton 2000 Partnership: IT Resource Centre	Regeneration in the District
	Thornley (2)- community partnership (New Thornley Steering Group)	Initial Letter to group secretary, followed by attendance at a group meeting to explain purpose of focus group work and agreement to run focus group at next meeting	Grp 1: 3 male 8 female [inc. 2 cdws] Grp 2: 5 male 3 female [inc. 2 district councillors] mean age: 50	Thornley Catholic Club	Regeneration in the District
	Trimdon Station- community partnership (Trimdon Station Residents Association)	Initial Letter to group secretary, followed by attendance at next group meeting to run focus group within the meeting	2 male 6 female [inc. 2 community development workers- cdws] mean age: 54	Trimdon Station Community House	Regeneration in the District
Turning The Tide	*Easington*- North & South Side Residents Association	Met secretary of group whilst undertaking part time work. Agreed to set up focus group on the topic of TTT.	5 male 2 female mean age: 55 [inc. 1 parish councillor]	Easington Colliery Resource Centre	Turning the Tide and Regeneration in the District
SRB 5	*Parkside*- Residents Association	Met secretary of group whilst he was canvassing for help. After many meetings with the group it was agreed I could run a focus group.	4 male mean age, n=3 : 61	Home of one of the group members	Parkside/ SRB5
	Dawdon- Residents Association	Initial Letter to group secretary, who set up a focus group meeting	2 male 3 female mean age: 54	Dawdon Miners Welfare Hall	Regeneration in the District and SRB5/6
Settlement Renewal Initiatives	*Easington*- SRI Steering group members	Project Manager set up focus group	4 male 3 female mean age, n=6: 66 [inc. 2 district councillors]	Easington Colliery Resource Centre	Regeneration in the District
	Blackhall- SRI Steering group members	Project Manager set up focus group after I had attended group steering meeting to explain purpose	4 male 1 female mean age: 60 [inc. 2 district councillors and 1 parish councillor]	Blackhall Community Centre	Regeneration in the District
Dalton Flatts	*Murton*- Dalton Flatts Action Group	Met members of the Action Group at the public inquiry, was given their names and tel. numbers and convened the focus group myself	4 male 2 female mean age: 45 [inc. 1 parish councillor]	A (quiet) Public House in Murton	Regeneration in the District and Dalton Flatts

Table 3.2 . Focus Group Design

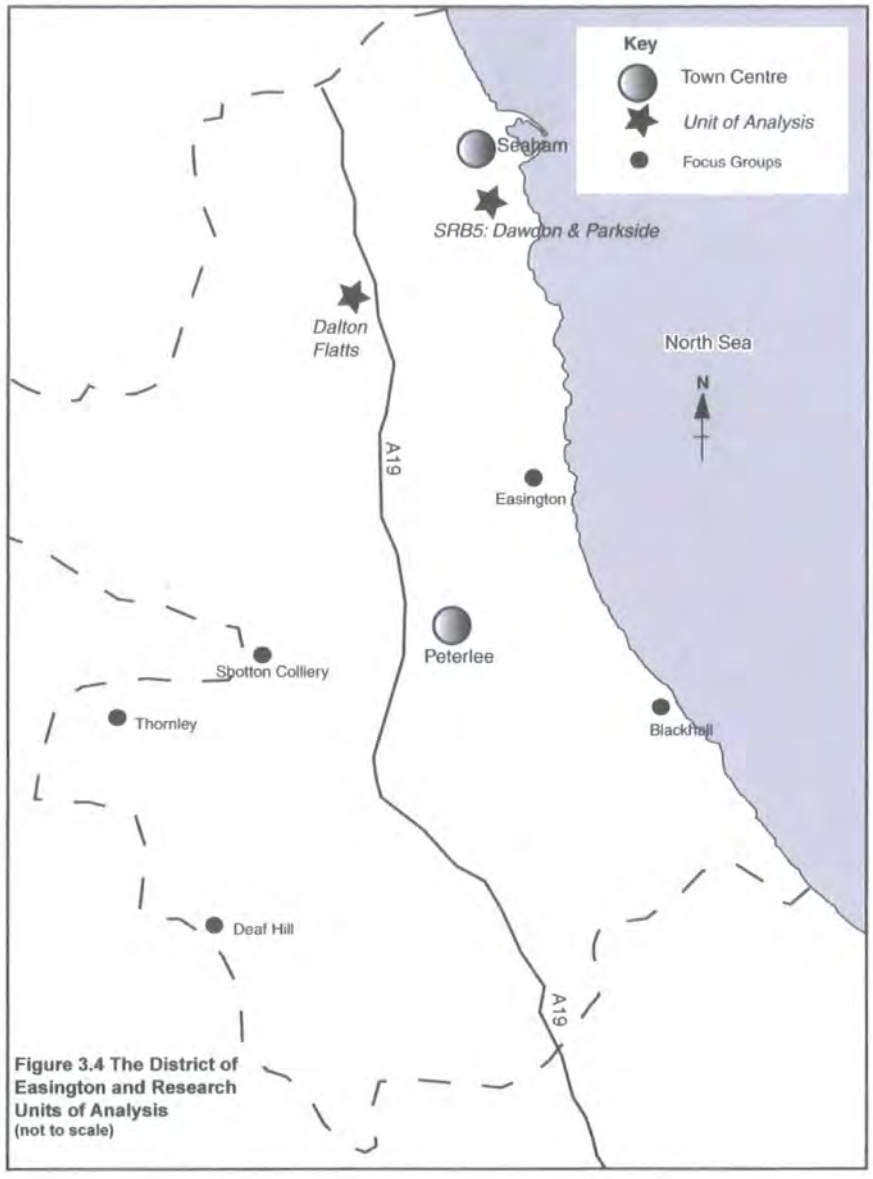

Figure 3.4 The District of Easington and Research Units of Analysis
(not to scale)

Groups ranged in size from four to eleven individuals. They were composed of a wide range of individuals (see Table 3.2 for details), such as local activists; local community members; community development workers; parish, district or county councillors; and local government officers. In general there was a mix of genders. However, the mean age of most groups tended to be over 45[ix].

Settings

The group interviews were conducted in a variety of locations, ranging from a public house, community centres and welfare halls to a groups member's home (see Table 3.2 for details). The locations were usually chosen by the interviewees and were often the spaces within which they had their usual meetings. Indeed I was often invited to run the focus group at the end of an ordinary meeting. Some locations were not ideal and did not facilitate group discussions, nor aid the process of tape recording, due to the layout of the room furniture. I had no control over these either, and was often merely grateful to hold the focus group at all.

Recording

All focus group interviews were taped and subsequently transcribed. In addition, each participant was asked to complete a form that recorded personal details for future reference and possible follow ups (see Appendix 4 for a sample pro-forma).

Moderation and Structuring

> "Rather than attempting to observe behaviour as it naturally occurs, focus groups create concentrated conversations that might never occur in the 'real world'." (Morgan, 1998:31)

Conversation is 'created' within the environment of a focus group. The degree to which the researcher controls this 'creation of conversation' will vary, dependent upon the research methodology of any given project. If rejecting assumptions of objective reality, as does much of the methodological literature upon which focus groups are grounded (for instance Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990), then, the researcher accepts that controlling such variants as group composition, dynamics and interactions will not lead

to the uncovering of 'truth' from that group. That said, the researcher does need to ensure the group is recruited and run with the theoretical and empirical aims of the research project in mind.

A moderator (the researcher) needs to develop a wide suite of skills when working with focus groups. In any given focus group a series of events may occur, as highlighted in Table 3.3. These 'events' need to be managed effectively by the moderator in order to facilitate appropriate 'conversation' and obtain useful, relevant, research evidence. Burgess *et al* (1988a) suggest that there are a number of facilitating skills required for small in-depth discussion groups, such as listening, using silences, not asking direct questions, drawing in silent members, keeping to the task, handling conflict and protecting individuals. These skills are also of value in once-only groups.

- an exchange of opinions/ experiences
- moderator obtains opinions
- moderator and interviewees gaining simultaneous insights
- the making of revelations/ discoveries
- emotionally charged situations
- contradictory situations
- participants choosing not to participate
- some participants being more vocal/ dominating the discussion
- silences
- discussion moving off topic

Table 3.3. Events within a Focus Group Setting
(Sources: Goss *et al*, 1996; Burgess *et al*, 1988a; Bennett, 2001);

To engender a 'conversation' within the focus groups, I undertook the role of a 'facilitator'. I worked to create an environment whereby participants were willing to share their feelings, experiences and ideas (Morgan, 1998) and used skills outlined by

Burgess *et al* (1988a). At the beginning of each focus group I outlined my role and what I expected from the group (see Appendix 5 for sample focus group interview schedule with introductory speech). I added prompts to my interview schedule to remind myself of certain skills, such as drawing in silent members. During the course of the focus group activities, I gained more experience and honed my facilitating skills to a point that I no longer needed the prompts and found it easier to allow the discussion to flow, without interruption from myself or dominant group members.

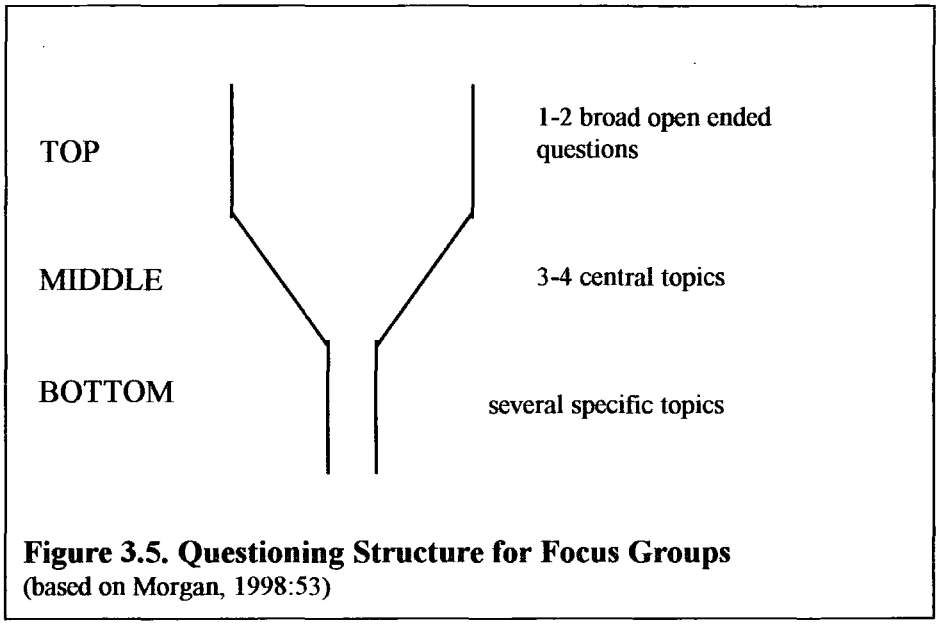

Figure 3.5. Questioning Structure for Focus Groups
(based on Morgan, 1998:53)

The structure of questioning adopted for the groups is illustrated in Figure 3.5. It is based upon the principle of a funnel design, as advocated by Morgan (1998). The top of the funnel starts the 'conversation' with broad, open ended questions. At this point the facilitator has little input other than to encourage all members of the group to have their say and ensure the topic has been exhausted before moving on. The context to the questions asked is grounded in the empirical aspect of the research questions; such that throughout the focus group, the aim is to generate a conversation about regeneration

and sustainability within East Durham. The middle of the funnel deals quite specifically with these topics, they may have emerged during the open-ended questioning making the discussion more familial for the group. Finally, the bottom of the funnel brings the group conversation to a conclusion by focusing on a narrowly defined issue. In the example of focus group questioning provided in Appendix 5 the focus/ stimuli for the bottom of the funnel is Dalton Flatts. In other focus groups the conclusion was altered as appropriate to the group (see Table 3.2 for details).

3.3.3 Observations

The main tool of the ethnographic researcher is participant observation (Clifford & Marcus, 1986). The researcher spends time observing and interacting with a group (Herbert, 2000). They are situated within the lives of others, and should attempt to allow this empathic experience to influence the research agenda (Bennett, 2002b). It is an inductive form of research. The aim is to seek an understanding of actions within the context of the observed setting (May, 1997). To achieve this aim, the researcher adopts a role which is dependant upon the theoretical underpinnings of the study. The researcher should be reflexive about their role and influence upon the research situation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Gold (1969:36) identifies a spectrum of roles that the researcher could adopt in field observations:

1. **complete observer**- where the researcher has no interaction with the subjects; for example in some psychological research projects people are observed through one-way mirrors, for the purposes of objectivity and to eliminate reactivity to the researcher (Foster, 1996).
2. **observer as participant**- the researcher interacts with subjects but is not 'involved' as a group member (of the group under study). The researcher spends short periods of time observing in a large number of settings. It can, however, mean that the researcher misunderstands issues due to a lack of familiarity and may be viewed

with suspicion due to the lack of a developed relationship with those being observed (May, 1997).

3. **participant as observer**- the researcher's role is overt and participatory. Sometimes the researcher will take a role, if appropriate, however May (1997) cautions against pretending to be one of the group, as this may be challenged and tested. Taking a participatory role, or overtly establishing relationships/ rapport with subjects, facilitates access and enables greater degrees of openness then the first two roles would foster. The main advantage of this role is that the researcher should be able to adopt a more empathetic understanding, seeing the social world from the point of view of those observed (Foster, 1996).
4. **complete participant**- the researcher engages in a covert role as a member of the group under study. The researcher may be a member of the group or may join the group for the purpose of the study. In either situation access is facilitated via membership and the researcher is free to observe openly. Clearly there are ethical considerations associated with this role.

Whilst the separating out of these roles for the purpose of description is useful, during fieldwork it is likely that the researcher will engage in a number, if not all, of these roles (Foster, 1996). Shifting between the roles will become important at different stages of the research and in different research locations. Delineating strictly between covert and overt roles is not always clear cut as the researcher, inevitably, only reveals their intentions in partial format (Bennett, 2002b). By adopting a reflexive approach to the observations, the researcher is able to account for the moments when their role alters and the impacts they have upon any given situation under observation.

Participant observation is by no means an easy task. May (1997) and Geertz (1973) suggest that it may appear, at a glance, to be merely about looking, listening, experiencing and writing it all down. The experience is, however, highly demanding, both physically and emotionally (Bennett, 2002b; May, 1997). The researcher is essentially role-playing; providing a performance, securing and maintaining relationships, in order to negotiate access and record the, sometimes, mundane. It can also be a physically risky endeavour (Dowler, 2001). All these issues, however, add to

the richness of the experience and can provide a powerful account that other methods might not uncover (explored in detail in chapters 6 and 10).

Observations provide another source of evidence for this case study and aid the triangulation and validity of the research design within this thesis. Numerous forms of observation were undertaken throughout the course of the fieldwork process. The aim here is to provide a brief account of the sampling strategy, the observational roles adopted, and the methods of recording employed. Observations varied from those made whilst undertaking interviews (with myself often taking the 'observer as participant' role) to those made during the course of a public inquiry (Table 3.4 lists the settings of observations). I also attended a number of events and meetings where the focus was upon regeneration[x]. On occasions I was an active participant in these meetings but mostly I remained a (mute) observer. Sometimes my presence was not accounted for by the chair of the meeting, and I was often viewed with much scepticism. At some public meetings, due to my extensive note taking, I was associated as a journalist or member of the council, attracting a considerable amount of hostility. In addition, I made a number of observations during the time in which I worked as a part-time researcher on the ESRC project. Occasionally I had difficulty breaking off from making observations, the 'field' often entered my home and private life, which is a common aspect of the ethnographic process (Bennett, 2002b; Hastrup, 1987)

Data generated from such observations was logged in the form of field record. Whilst 'in the field' I took hand written notes and later supplemented them from memory, photographs and audio to produce a comprehensive field record. The emphasis was upon recording,

> "behaviour and events in their wholeness; that is, taking full account of the social and cultural context in which they occur, and examining the perspectives and interpretations of participants." (Foster, 1997:83)

The indicative contents of the field recordings are listed in Table 3.5. I selectively recorded issues of context, behaviour and procedure, in a systematic manner. The field record was updated on a regular basis; leaving no more than two days to elapse between observation and recording. The field record is written in a personal manner, especially in the instances where I record my feelings and attempt to make sense of the emerging interpretation. It is stored within a set of emails, that I sent to myself, to enable the use of qualitative data analysis software for interpretation (see below). The field record is rich in description and depth (and length - at over 60,000 words in total). It provides an invaluable data source, alongside other documents and interviews, and is heavily drawn upon through the interpretation and analysis process.

interviews	
focus groups	
meetings	– **public meetings/ rallies**
	– **committees**
	– **information provision events**
	– **information gathering events**
guided tours	
conversations	
telephone conversations	

Table 3.4. Observational Settings/ Occurrences

Contextual	Behavioural	Procedural
content of speeches	general behaviour	analytical issues
Settings	personal characteristics	issues/ themes for further investigation
arrangement of furniture	relationships between individuals	further contacts worth following
arrangement of people	reactions towards me	literature to obtain and examine
images drawn upon	my reactions to individuals/ events	
presentation of individuals use of props		

Table 3.5. Observational Material Recorded within the Field Record

3.3.4 Physical Artefacts

The final part of the case study design concerns physical artefacts. Whilst the main focus of this research project is upon the discursive practices that produce and reproduce the concepts under investigation, physical artefacts, such as the environment, in various physical settings, have been employed in data generation. Images/ imaginings of the environment have proved useful as stimuli during interviews and focus groups, with either myself or the participants producing and reproducing them within discussion or as part of the claims making process. I should be clear here, however, that I use the 'environment'/ nature as another actor in the processes of regeneration, in line with Actor Network Theory, and not as a separate entity (Murdoch, 1997).

Prior to one of the Turning the Tide focus groups, for instance, two members of the group invited me to a site visit at the coast and explained their issues to me personally. In addition, I was taken to the same site by another research participant who was keen to show me an alternative way of viewing the same site. Other physical artefacts that feature in the interpretation of data include the use of advertisement hoardings, banners, balloons and so on, to promote the views of interested parties in the Dalton Flatts case (see Chapter 6).

3.4 Methods of Interpretation

The case study and associated qualitative methods, previously outlined produced a significant amount of evidence (see Table 3.6). Analysis of this data should be sensitive to aims and theoretical interests of the research (May, 1997). To provide a data framework that summarises the data and conveys the key themes and processes the aim of this analysis, then, is to undertake an inductive process of multiple readings and interpretations of the data. The grounded theory approach to qualitative data analysis plays a significant role in this process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), however, other forms of interpretation are also employed, discussed in the following section. Subsequent sections explore the methods employed in the process of interpreting the evidence gathered.

3.4.1 Theorising Interpretation

Employing an inductive approach to the thesis, that of grounded theory, determined the broad framework via which interpretation should be undertaken. At the very least it has to be an iterative process (Crang, 1997), which includes an ongoing process of

moving back and forth between the data and theory generation. Previous sections outlined the influence of grounded theory upon the collection of evidence for this thesis. At all stages of the evidence collection process the data was subject to a form of analysis/ interpretation which informed subsequent events in the collection process. The field record was used as a medium for 'making sense' of the emerging theory and guiding further investigations. It was not until the whole fieldwork period was concluded, however, that a full examination of the evidence commenced.

Type of Evidence	Amount Collected
Documents/ Archival Records	150+ items
Interview Transcripts	1930 minutes
Focus Group Transcripts	720 minutes
Field Record	60,000+ words
Images	30+ photos

Table 3.6. Type and Amount of Evidence Collected

The process of examining the data was approached from a theoretical stance. Both the constructionist and ethnographic agenda of this thesis stress the importance of focusing specifically upon discursive practices and their embeddedness in social relations of power and ideology. Consequently, the data generated was either in the form of text or transformed into this format for analysis, see Figure 3.3. The data generated from the collection process is a form of narrative, with the exception of physical artefacts, either in written or oral (then transcribed) format. Narratives are a form of discourse by which,

> "we make sense of the wider, more differentiated and thus complex texts and contexts of our experience." (Harré *et al*, 1999:70)

In talking about life events we generally employ a narrative, we tell a story, using certain linguistic conventions. Narratives are distinguishable from other discourses in that they have a beginning, continue over time and then have a conclusion (Cronon, 1992),

> "if one defines a narrative as a story with a beginning, middle and end that reveals someone's experiences, narratives take many forms, are told in many settings, before many audiences, and with varying degrees of connection to actual events or persons." (Manning & Cullum Swan, 1994:465)

Narrative analysis, too, can take a variety of forms such as deconstruction and semiotic analysis (Riessman, 1993).

The main focus of the analysis of discourses (narratives) is deconstruction, which is an attempt to 'take apart' texts and analyse how they are constructed in their presentation of particular phenomena (Lynch, 1998). Deconstruction can take several forms (Burr, 1995). Firstly, *revealing contradictions*- looking at texts in a particular area or discipline, revealing how they contain 'hidden' internal contradictions, and making the absent or repressed meanings present for the reader, illustrating how we are led by the text into accepting the assumptions it contains (Burr, 1995- drawing upon Derrida). In addition, deconstruction of texts can focus on the analysis of their *rhetorical nature*, as texts are constructed using rhetorical devices to present justifiable accounts (Best, 1987), so we could look at ways these devices are used. An attempt is made to look at not only what is being said, but also at what is not being said (implicitly rejected).

Secondly, deconstruction can also be described as the *archaeology of knowledge* - tracing the development of present ways of understanding, of current discourses and representations to illustrate how current 'truths' have come to be constituted, how they are maintained and what power relations are supported via them (this draws upon Foucauldian theory). This is perhaps more allied to 'the analysis of discourses' whereby a prevailing discourse, such as sustainability, may be examined and its identity and power implications illustrated.

Other methods of analysing narratives include Cronon's (1992) interpretation of the plot lines of narratives as either portraying an acensionist (progress) or declenist (decline) tale[xi]. Stories can either be constructed positively and progressively or negative and tragically. As such, plots are cultural constructions deeply embedded in our language (Cronon, 1992), as human inventions, stories, can produce multiple competing narratives (*Op cit.*) This has particular relevance to the stories of sustainability and regeneration that may be employed for particular purposes; what are the stories of sustainability in coalfield regeneration, do they exist, whose stories are they, who is excluded from the story? This form of analysis helps to explore all the research questions, but particularly the final one: the implications of the understandings of sustainability and regeneration that are employed in the regeneration practices and performances of East Durham.

Throughout the interpretation process of this thesis, the aim has been to employ all of the above approaches in analysing the emerging evidence. Some are deployed to a lesser degree, however, they are all used to reveal patterns within the evidence. The following sections provide a detailed account of this undertaking; starting with a

discussion of how data was prepared for analysis, including transcription and standardisation; followed by an account of the coding process and subsequent developing interpretative framework.

3.4.2 Data Preparation: Transcripts

> "Although written transcripts cannot convey the subtle dialogues of voice inflections, body language, and personality, they contain rich insights into people's environmental and social experiences, feelings, and values." (Burgess *et al*, 1988b:458)

All interviews and focus groups were recorded and subsequently transcribed. Transcription was undertaken to standardise the evidence gathered from interviews and focus groups with the documentary data and field record into the format of text. Burgess *et al* (1988b) note, as above, that this may result in the loss of some qualitative insights, however, it is an essential means of managing the data in the interpretative process. A means of supplementing the transcripts is available via the field record, within which the qualitative issues of body language, and so on, may well have been recorded.

In total there are 720 minutes of focus group discussions and 1930 minutes of interviews transcribed. The majority of the transcripts were transcribed by an experienced researcher[xii]. I transcribed the focus group and interviews associated with the Dalton Flatts unit of analysis, and in doing so realised my limitations in typing- in terms of time constraints. To avoid this problem I employed someone to transcribe all subsequent audio tapes.

An appropriate convention for the transcripts was utilised, in line with the purpose of the research project (Boulton & Hammersley, 1996). The transcripts did not need to record all linguistic nuances (as some discourse analytical agendas require (see Macnaghten, 1993). However, they had to reflect the full content of the discussion and note any significant pauses, hesitations, confusions, exclamations, interruptions and so on (see Appendix 6 for a sample transcript[xiii]). Where interviewees diverged to non-relevant topics, often of a personal nature, transcription was omitted. To act as a check on the transcription process I listened to each tape with the transcription (produced by the transcriber) on the computer screen; there was often a need to alter spellings of place names and correct colloquial phases. This process was also highly useful in the evolving interpretation phase, and theoretical memos were made whilst checking the transcripts.

3.4.3 Coding

Once data had been prepared and standardised the analysis began with, what some researchers call, a 'close reading' of the data set (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). This close reading(s) involved a detailed examination of the data, reading each line and noting down ideas about the multiple meanings of the text (what is meant? what is being done? why? and so on). These ideas were 'jotted' next to text in the margin. This process is described by Struass and Corbin (1990) as *open coding*. In their work, dealing with grounded theory and the prescriptives of qualitative research, coding is an import element of interpretation;

> "Coding is analysis. To review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relations between

> the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis." (Miles & Huberman, 1994:56)

Codes are 'labels' for themes, categories, that emerge from the data set. Text segments (of any length) may contain a number of meaningful units (codes) and each will be noted. The aim is to reach a position whereby a stable set of categories (codes) exist and a systematic coding of all the data in term of these categories can be carried out, for the purpose of exploring relations with other categories (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

This process of coding the evidence is highly personal, and invariably influenced by the original research questions. Jones (1985) highlights the difficulties involved with approaching the data set without *a priori* themes in mind (as noted in the previous chapter this reflects the tensions of using grounded theory). She further notes that if we take the grounded theory approach literally we would expect to see categories in the data that are just 'there' waiting to be discovered. In practice we all approach the data with different interests, which will inevitably come to the front when coding. Hammersley & Atkinson (1995) suggest that theoretical ideas, common-sense expectations and stereotypes will often play a key role in analysis. To remain 'open' to new categories, and to ensure a transparency of analytical method, the aim should be to employ a systematic approach, which attempts to understand the data in context (Jones, 1985).

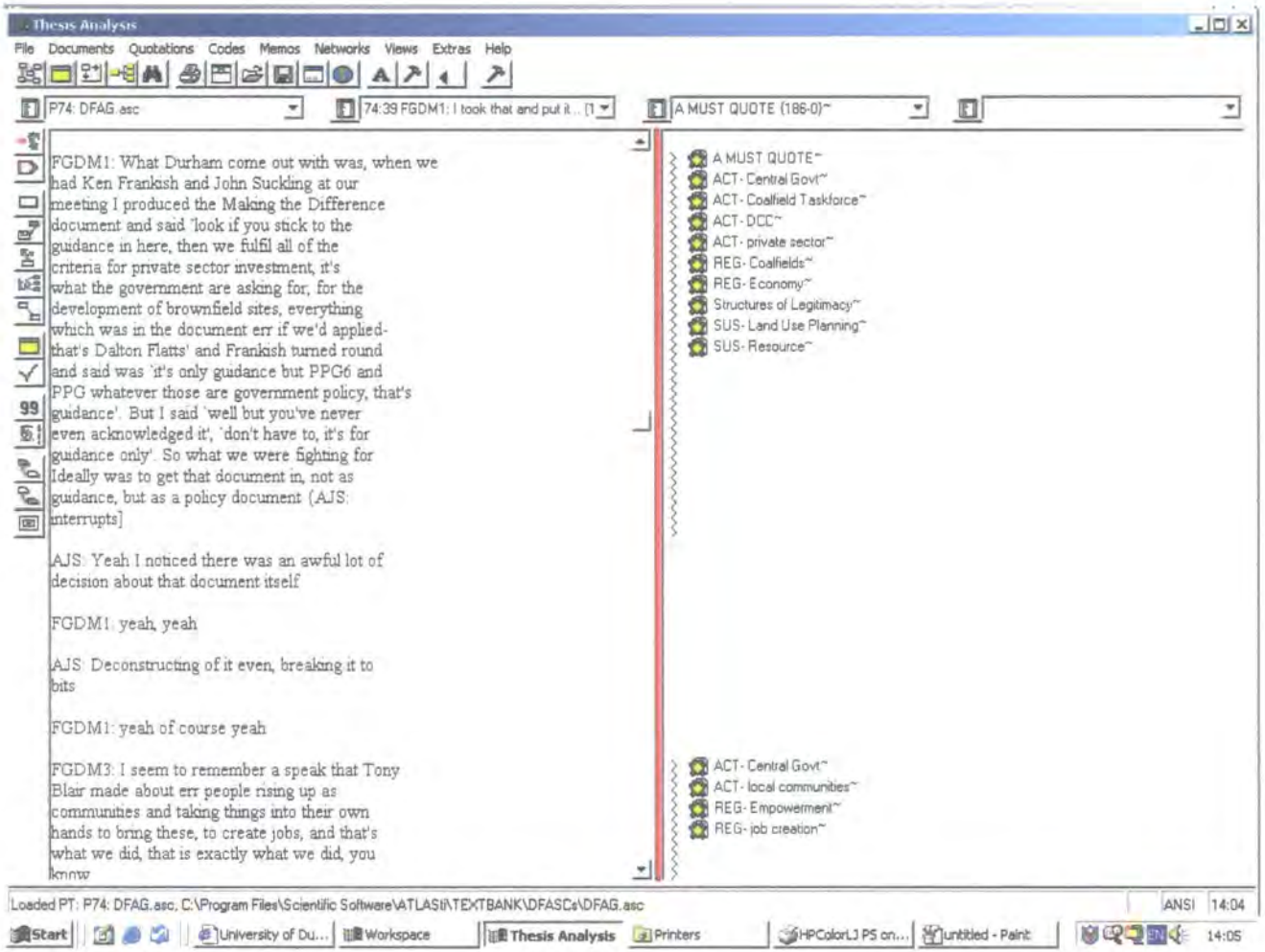

Figure 3.6 Example of Coding in Atlas.ti

Upon completion of open coding I revisited the data set. This was managed using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). The general purpose of this software is twofold; firstly, it allows segments of text to have a number of codes attached; and secondly, it permits retrieval of all segments of text that share the same code (Coffey *et al*, 1996). This is an important stage in the coding process. Struass & Corbin (1990) term this *Axial Coding*. The main advantage of using CAQDAS is that it performs these tasks of coding and retrieval far more quickly than can be accomplished by hand (although it is no different to undertaking the task with pen and paper) (Coffey *et al*, 1996; Kelle, 1997). My choice of software was based upon ease of use of programme. I had no intention of using the software to generate theory, although some software have this capacity (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Kelle, 1997). I used the software package Atlas.ti Version 4.1 for Windows, whose strengths are noted as its immediacy, its visual and spatial qualities, its creativity and its inter-linkage (Barry, 1998). This was not a choice made lightly, I experimented with a number of packages, including Nudist and Ethnograph, considering the relative merits and disadvantages of each, before settling on this one.

The use of CAQDAS helped to automate and speed up the processes of coding. Atlas.ti allowed for the labelling of segments of interviews and fieldnotes with differing codes (Appendix 7 lists the 107 codes used; whilst Figure 3.6 illustrates the process of using codes in Atlas.ti). The processes of open and axial coding revealed 10 main codes (as illustrated in Table 3.7) and a series of sub-codes (in the interests of transparency, which will be discussed in the following section, Appendix 8 provides an explicit account of my coding processes). Boolean searches aided in the constant

interplay between the proposing and checking of theories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Other Atlas.ti functions, such as quotation retrieval, aided in the process of *selective coding* whereby the narratives were deconstructed and then reconstructed in meaningful ways to provide a presentational framework for the core of evidence collected. This 'final' process is examined in the following section, which deals with the art of interpretation - writing (Denzin, 1994).

Actors
Circulation of Knowledge
Contextual Issues of Place
Disjuncture of Discourse
Discourses of Regeneration
Research Issues
Spaces of Regeneration
Structures of Legitimacy
Discourses of Sustainability
Time

Table 3.7. Main Codes used in Thesis Interpretation

3.5 Writing: a labour of love?

> "The phrase 'writing up', applied to a piece of research, always sounds so depressing....The writing-up stage is so often a time of disillusionment, brought on by the realization that the exciting contribution one was intending to make to the state of knowledge can never be anything more than a dull report- mere *écriture*." (Bennett & Shurmer-Smith, 2002:211-2)

Indeed, throughout the prolonged period of writing this thesis I have found myself upon an emotional roller coaster- swinging from the jubilance of feeling that I have *captured* the unique essence of certain situations and contexts in East Durham whilst

plummeting in frustration with the bounds of the product of the thesis, which can rarely *represent* the process of the research. In the quote, above, Bennett & Shurmer-Smith are drawing upon Cocteau's definition of 'writing' as,

> "Writing [*écrire*] is an act of love. If it is not, it is just recording [*écriture*]." (cited in op cit:211)

This problematic in the process of writing is faced by so many researchers- just how do I deal with that mountain of evidence I have gathered? How do I address the rigours required of research, such as validity and representitiveness, whilst producing an interesting, structured, transparent and authentic text? These issues, which I will address shortly, are clearly not new; and I am far from the first researcher to address them. Certainly, the 1980s critiques of ethnography (such as Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Crapanzano, 1980; Marcus & Fischer, 1986; Sangren, 1988; and Strathern, 1987) have challenged many researchers to consider *their* agency within the research process.

Implicit in the more traditional endeavour of ethnography was the notion of 'others' where 'others' are the researched and the 'ethnographer' acts as an interpreter, providing a representation of their practices and worlds (Agar, 1986). This interpretation of such a relationship is fraught with power differentials. Ascribing the 'ethnographer' with much of the power and knowledge and the 'researched others' as passive (Katz, 1992). Indeed, this has been part of the critique of the ethnographic endeavour (Marcus and Fisher, 1986) and warnings of the need to be self-critical and reflexive have become common place (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995), for where there is a version of 'other' there will always be a version of 'self' (Clifford, 1986), especially given my 'insider' status throughout this research. There has been a growing

recognition that the ethnographer cannot maintain the "neopositivist's professional armour" (England, 1994:81) of the impartial, personality free, outside observer. As such, a self-critical reflexivity is required which addresses the issues of the ethnographer observing 'others' and the affect of the ethnographer on the researched and the research (Herbert, 2000).

Yet my problem still remains- how do **'I'** write? Part of my problem is what Katy Bennett describes as the selfish nature of research and writing,

> "my analysis, my argument, my writings." (Bennett, 1998:54)

So often I have found myself 'creating' sections of text (in meaningful ways), in order to address my research questions, and as such the ethnography has been,

> "something made or fashioned." (Clifford, 1986:6)

My writing does not merely (re)present the evidence. I have chosen to tell certain stories at the expense of others (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Berg & Mansvelt, 2000). The thesis simultaneously represents many voices whilst hiding many others. I am bound by the requirements of examination; my audience; the information I have gathered (with whose voices was I the most empathetic and heard the loudest?); and my own actions and emotions. Agar suggests that in this way,

> "ethnographies emerge out of a relationship among the traditions of ethnographer, group and intended audience." (Agar, 1986:19)

Certainly, I recognise that the product of my research, this thesis, has been socially constructed. This is perhaps why I have found it so hard to 'write'. I have, however, endeavoured to remain rigorous in my handling of the evidence (see above and Appendix 8) in order to produce a valid and trustworthy account of my findings

(Baxter & Eyles, 1997; Crang, 2001). I have employed a constant comparative method and remained highly reflexive to the tensions surrounding grounded theory (as outlined in the previous chapter). My writing has attempted to provide 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) and be as polyvocal as possible (Bennett & Shurmer-Smith, 2001). This has been achieved using my own ethnographic account, placing the reader in the context of each situation that I draw upon (see Chapter 6 for details of the units of analysis and my ethnography), and remaining true to the stories that I have gathered, and presenting them as I have heard them, or saw them played out before me (sometimes *with* me). I return to these issues in Chapter 10, however, now I must 'write' and tell you the story of regeneration and sustainability in East Durham.

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[i] In the summer of 1991 I worked with East Durham Groundwork Trust as Youth Leader at a play group in Wheatley Hill. As part of my Masters degree I undertook at ten week placement (May-July 1992) on the Settlement Renewal Initiative (SRI) "The Wingate & Station Town Regeneration Project" and subsequently based my masters thesis on this project.

[ii] I was a part-time research assistant on the ESRC funded project *Social exclusion of flexible adaptation: coal districts in a period of economic transition* from October 1999-August 2000.

[iii] The units are listed in chronological research order. Their location within East Durham is illustrated in Figure 3.4.

[iv] I used the term 'grey literature' to refer to a variety of documents produced by actors and agencies within the regeneration process, ranging from policy documents and regeneration bids to those documents used in planning applications and appeals. All of which draw upon constructions of regeneration or sustainability.

[v] On several occasions media coverage of regeneration initiatives or conflicts such as the Dalton Flatts inquiry generated useful newspaper clippings (often from the Sunderland Echo, Northern Echo or Evening Chronicle). All clippings were photocopied and filed.

[vi] On some occasions information was readily produced during or prior to interviews, It was always interesting to note the exact document provided and in contrast the documents NOT provided. On other occasions it was particularly difficult to obtain information. The general circulation of information provision was well documented in the field record.

[vii] Saturation can be considered to have been reached when "learning and fresh insights were minimal" (Bailey *et al*, 1999:176)

[viii] Known by various labels including community partnerships and regeneration steering groups.

[ix] This age delineation could be a reflection of recent population demographic changes as outlined in 6.2.4.

[x] For instance: Regeneration Steering Group Meeting 'The Way Forward' 5th May 2000 Seaton Holme, Easington.

[xi] This is similar to Landau's use of Proppian functions- the conventions of narratology- to explore the evolution of mankind, Harré, 1999.

[xii] Dr Philippa Sherrington, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick.

[xiii] To protect the anonymity of respondents this thesis will not provide copies of all transcripts.

4.1 The Enigma of Sustainable Development

> "During the past decade the concept of "sustainable development" has become widely celebrated as a public policy goal to be supported and furthered on the basis of scientific research, as members of diverse interest groups have advocated shifts to more sustainable economic development." (Peterson, 1997:2)

Sustainable development is a particularly popular, yet enigmatic, concept. It holds considerable public currency, advocating a wide variety of (in)actions towards the 'environment', 'economic growth' and numerous 'other' goals. It also has considerable global mobilisation. Yet it is rarely operationalised as a single coherent ideology (Adams, 1990). The concept lacks clear definition and, as such, is multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and highly contested (Holmberg & Sandbrook, 1992; Redclift, 1992). It is a slippery concept whose malleability appeals to the purposes of a wide range of actors (Eden, 2000; Harvey, 1996).

Many international agencies, governments, multinational corporations, and so on, subscribe to the Brundtland Commission's definition, which is outlined in the report '*Our Common Future*', where sustainable development is seen as development that,

> "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (WCED, 1987:8)

and encompassing two key concepts;

> "• the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
> • the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs." (*op cit*:43)

Mainstream, hegemonic, discourses of sustainable development have tended to follow from this definition (Adams, 1995a; Lélé, 1991), with a focus upon a "triad" of concerns: basic needs, eco-development and sustainable resource use (O'Riordan, 1988; Jacobs, 1991).

The Brundtland definition has, however, led to much 'heated' discussion and is often interpreted with considerable variety, to suit specific purposes. Holmberg & Sandbrook (1992) note there are seventy definitions of sustainable development in use and Pearce *et al* (1989) provide a gallery of over twenty definitions. Sustainable development has been chastised as a "cliché"; a "catchphrase for the 90s"; "terribly versatile"; "a truism"; and "beguiling in simplicity" (Holmberg & Sandbrook, 1992:20; Atkinson *et al*, 1997:1; Adams, 1990:3; Redclift, 1987:3; O'Riordan, 1988:29). It is prey to differing interpretations for the support of various interested parties (Blowers & Glasbergen, 1995; Kirby *et al*, 1996; Adams, 1995a; Hartman, 1998; Redclift 1992). Some consider that, due to its over use and ambiguity, sustainable development has reached a conceptual and political dead end (Sneddon, 2000).

Yet the terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' remain extremely popular in current policy discourses. It is difficult not to be in favour of sustainable development, as it seems to hold out the hope of 'development' with at least no further environmental degradation and an improved quality of life (Atkinson *et al*, 1997: Pearce *et al*, 1989; Dryzek, 1997). It offers to bridge the gap between economic growth and environmental preservation, without significant changes to the capitalist market system (Escobar,1996). It is not surprising then to find the terms appearing in a wide range of policy discourses, such as regeneration, land use planning, community development, agriculture, transport

and waste management, to name but a few (Gibbs, 1997; Counsell, 1998; Owens, 1997; Long, 2000;Cobb *et al*, 1999; LGMB, 1993).

This chapter explores the evolution of the concepts of 'sustainable development' and sustainability, highlighting the ways in which they have drawn upon Northern environmentalism and been shaped by critiques of development processes. It comments upon the popularity and mobility of the Brundtland definition, at the expense of 'other' sustainability discourses. The chapter further analyses the 'grand puzzle' of sustainability interpretations and discourses before considering the ways in which sustainable development is being operationalised. Policy responses to sustainable development within the UK are used as an example. Firstly, however, it is essential to clarify some important terminology.

4.2 Sustainability and Sustainable Development- clarifying the semantics?

The terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are frequently used interchangeably and rarely clarified (Agyeman & Evans, 1994). This has tended to further muddy the waters of debate and application of the concept(s) (Sneddon, 2000). Many take the term 'sustainability' to be synonymous with 'sustainable development' (Reid, 1995). Yet there are some clear distinctions and care should be taken to establish these.

'Sustainable', as an adjective in the English language, means enduring or lasting at a certain rate or indefinitely[i]. In essence the term can refer to many things; such as activities, processes, objectives or goals- with a "bewildering multiplicity of criteria" (Worcester, 1993:134). In environmentalist discourses it has been used to refer to

(sustainable) *use* and *growth* (Selman, 1996). The 'concept' of sustainability originated as an ecological concept in reference to the context of renewable resources (Bartelmus, 1994). Ecological sustainability (sustainable resource use) implies that resources, such as crops, timber, fisheries and so on, should be *used* at a rate less than or equal to their replenishment rate (Selman, 1996). Sustainable *growth*, on the other hand, tends to refer to continued increases in GDP but subject to environmental controls (Redclift, 1987). Indeed, the term 'sustainable' can be used as a prefix or suffix to a variety of actions, which should caution us to question;

> "What is to be sustained? For whom? How long?"
> (Lélé, 1991:615)

For instance, some users of the terminology 'sustainable' may simply be referring to sustaining a development project beyond the period for which they plan to support it with an initial injection of resources (Barraclough, 2001).

Some authors, however, suggest that 'sustainable' does not warrant much debate. They claim that the subsequent words are generally harder to define and often value laden (Atkinson *et al* 1997; Pearce *et al*, 1989). For instance, Pearce *et al* (1989) assert that the phrase 'sustainable development' should quite simply imply 'development that lasts' with the notion of what development means being the issue for debate. They, later, suggest that development[ii] is essentially *economic* development, which they claim can be narrowly defined as real GNP, or more broadly to include other indicators such as education, health and 'quality of life' (Pearce *et al*, 1993). This reflects the mainstream thinking associated with the concept of sustainable development, and particularly the Brundtland definition. Indeed, the following sections illustrate how this definition has been subjected to much critique based largely around its highly anthropocentric and

economic agenda, and the ways in which it has been an instrument in a transformative politics of environment and development (Sneddon, 2000).

In many ways the equation,

sustainability = sustainable + development

is false. Sustainability is a far more complex concept than the mainstream interpretations of sustainable development. It addresses additional ethical features, such as the appropriate management of nature, reflecting the more traditional concerns of environmentalism (Adams,1995b). 'Sustainability' in its strongest sense can be a highly biocentric and ethical endeavour. It is, therefore, important to highlight how the concept is rooted in environmentalist debates and how 'sustainable development' has evolved into a more palatable version of the 'sustainability' agenda.

4.3 The History of Sustainable Development and Sustainability

Sustainability and sustainable development, like all concepts, did not evolve in an historical vacuum (Adams, 1990). The concepts have emerged, been tempered by, and contributed to: cultural, political, geographic, social and economic modes of thought and action (McManus, 1996; Pezzoli, 1997). Whilst an etymology of the phrase 'sustainable development' is reasonably straightforward[iii] it does not reveal the discursive and ideological debates through which that phrase has come to hold such a prominent place in global discourses. Nor how other concepts have been marginalised in its wake. To achieve such objectives it is necessary to explore the historical frames of the environmental and development debates that have shaped the evolution and construction of the concept (Watts &McCarthy, 1997; Lipietz, 1995). In tracing the evolution of the terms sustainability and sustainable development many authors point to the emergence of

the concepts from Northern environmentalism (Adams, 1990; O'Riordan, 1988; Pepper, 1996), with the ideological stances of this environmentalism shaping, and being shaped by, critiques of development (Pezzoli, 1997; Kerry Turner, 1988).

Concern with scarcity of resources became a global theme during the 1960s. The notion of the Earth as 'one world' was popularised by the forces of Globalisation, namely increasing levels of trade and communication (Reid, 1995). Global 'crises' in the environment and development fields were galvanised into a global rhetoric. The *Global Problèmatique* emerged, as this crisis was labelled by the Club of Rome (Becker & Jahn, 1998; Hajer, 1995), out of concerns over three issues. Firstly, the impact of human activities upon the earth, especially with an increased awareness of the finiteness of resources but also with regards to increasing pollution and environmental degradation. Secondly, there was recognition of the increasing polarisation and inequity between rich and poor, at local, national and international levels, in terms of wealth and environmental resources. Finally, there was concern over the rate of population growth, especially in light of the previous issues (Kerry Turner, 1988, Kirby *et al*, 1996; Luke, 1999). Reid (1995) suggests that responses to the *Global Problèmatique* can be classified under the (not mutually exclusive labels) of environment and development. The responses reflected changing ideas about the 'environment' and notions of what constituted development and how it should be achieved throughout the decades of the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s (Elliott, 1994). Out of these changing ideas and responses to a 'global crisis', the evolution of sustainability and sustainable development can be traced from environmentalist and development critique perspectives. The following sections examine this evolution, commencing with an archaeological investigation into the roots of

environmentalist debates and concluding with a situational analysis of the emergence of the concepts from the 1960s onwards.

4.3.1 Environmentalism and Sustainability

It has been suggested by numerous authors, that the 1960s saw the 'rebirth' of environmentalism (Kerry Turner, 1988; O'Riordan, 1981, 1988; Pezzoli, 1997; Pepper, 1996; Kidd, 1992). This 'rebirth' reflected a distinct concern for resource availability and was at the roots of the conservation movement at this time (O'Riordan, 1981; Peterson, 1997). The publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson (1962) was a major landmark in the emergence of modern environmentalism (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998). Carson provided a particularly powerful narrative of a world in mortal danger as a result of society's rush to control nature. Her book captured public attention, selling 500,000 copies, and rallied support for the emerging 'new' environmentalism (Peterson, 1997).

Environmentalism, however, has a much longer and more diverse history, ranging along a number of ideological lines and geographical bases (Pezzoli, 1997; Harvey, 1996). To reveal the "invisibly" encoded environmentalist discourses within the sustainability movement, since the 1960s, it is important to identify the roots of such environmental discourses (Adams, 1995:88). The dualistic ideologies described by O'Riordan (1981) as technocentrism and ecocentrism[iv] provide useful frames, within which much of the debate over relations to nature can be placed (Harvey, 1996). As modes of thought these ideologies are dualistic in their attitudes to nature and their morality towards action. O'Riordan's typology of technocentrism and ecocentrism can be seen in Figure 4.1, illustrating,

> "four stopping points in what is really a continuum of environmental concern." (O'Riordan, 1981:375)

Ecocentrism		Technocentrism	
Deep environmentalism	Self-reliance, soft technologists, Communalists	Accomodaters	Cornucopians
1 Lack of faith in modern large-scale technology and its associated demands on elitist expertise, central state authority, and inherently antidemocratic institutions		1 Belief that economic growth and resource exploitation can continue assuming	1 Belief that man can always find a way out of any difficulties, either politically, scientifically, or technologically
2 Implication that materialism for its own sake is wrong, and that economic growth can be geared to providing for the basic needs for those below subsistence levels		a) suitable economic adjustments to taxes, fees etc.;	
		b) improvements in the legal rights to a minimum level of environmental quality;	2 Acceptance that pro-growth goals define the rationality of project appraisal and of policy formulation
Intrinsic importance of nature for the humanity of man	3 Emphasis on smallness of scale and hence community identity in settlement work, and leisure	c) compensation arrangements satisfactory to those who experience adverse environmental and/ or social effects	3 Optimistic about the ability of man to improve the lot of the world's people
Ecological (and other natural) laws dictate human morality	4 Integration of concepts of work and leisure through a process of personal and communal improvement	2 Acceptance of new project-appraisal techniques and decision review arrangements to allow for wider discussion or genuine search for consensus among representative groups of interested parties	4 Faith that scientific and technological expertise provides the basic foundation for advice on matters pertaining to economic growth, public health, and safety
Biorights- the right of endangered species or unique landscapes to remain unmolested	5 Importance of participation in community affairs, and of guarantees of minority interests. Participation seen both as a continuing education and political function.	3 Provision of effective environmental management agencies at national and local levels	5 Suspicious of attempts to widen the basis for participation and lengthy discussion in project appraisal and policy review
			6 Belief that any impediments can be overcome given a will, ingenuity, and sufficient resources arising out of wealth

Figure 4.1. Ecocentrism and Technocentrism (Source: O'Riordan, 1981:376, abridged)

On the left hand side of the continuum O'Riordan places the **ecocentric** ideology, with its twin subordinate ideologies of the '**deep environmentalists**' and the '**self-reliance/ soft technologists**'. Whilst on the right he places the **technocentrics,** and their sub-categories: the **Cornucopians** and the **Accommodaters**. Exploring the nature of the duality of these modes reveals much of the contention around usage and evolution of the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development.

4.3.1.1 The ecocentric mode

The ecocentric mode of thought is characterised by attitudes of reverence, humility, respect and care for nature. Codes of behaviour are based upon ecological principles. This is a mode of thought best understood through its roots in 19th century romanticism and its enrichment with the ideas of individuals such as Malthus[v] (Pepper, 1984; Harvey, 1996). Its geographical roots are not as distinctly 'Northern' as those of technocentricism (Adams, 1990); for instance Grove (1995) suggests that modern environmentalism emerged as a direct response to the destructive social and ecological conditions of colonial rule in the tropics.

Romanticism sought to promote diversity and uniqueness as excellence, especially with regards to nature (Pepper, 1984). O'Riordan (1981) suggests that the philosophies of the romantic transcendentalists of mid 19th century America provided a powerful account of the relationship between nature and society;

> "Nature they claimed, enjoyed its own morality which, when understood, could lead the sympathetic and responsive human being to a new spiritual awareness of his own potential, his obligations to others, and his responsibilities to the life-supporting processes of his natural surroundings." (O'Riordan 1981:3)

The transcendentalists believed that nature has its own 'biotic' rights, and that there should be respect for nature in its own right and not for pragmatic reasons, like the resources it can offer. As such, 'bioethics' should direct actions towards nature with a focus upon respect, and a distinct consciousness of human rights and responsibilities towards nature. Their concern for nature was rooted in the 'wilderness' debate, whereby the 'frontiersmen' felt they had freedom to roam and the 'rural or suburban 'yeoman'' accepted a need for conformism and law in order to bring about equality. Romantics feel that contact with wild nature purifies, refreshes and provides spiritual fulfilment (Pepper, 1996). Hence concern that 'wilderness' was being destroyed by human action bought about calls for protection. The notions of nature and 'bioethics', as promoted by the transcendentalists, are readily visible in current 'deep ecology' environmentalism (Devall & Sessions, 1985; Adams, 1995a; Pepper, 1996; Spretnak & Capra, 1985).

Of paramount importance to ecocentric philosophy is the notion of (natural) limits. These were first commented upon by The Reverend Thomas Malthus (Pepper, 1996). The basis of Malthus' proposition, in his first *Essay on the Principle of Population*, was that population growth would eventually reach the limits of food production, and unless checked, lead to famine, poverty, disease, and war (Harvey, 1996). It was a particularly apocalyptic vision of the Earth's resources being outstripped by an increasing population's food demands. He was sceptical of the abilities of agricultural production to be increased indefinitely, which reflected a contrast to the optimism in the agricultural revolution of the time (Pepper, 1996). This optimism is reflected in the technocentric mode of thought.

4.3.1.2 The technocentric mode

Technocentrism has been the dominant mode of thought towards nature and environmental problems in modern Western society (Pepper, 1996; O'Riordan, 1981; Harvey, 1996; Dryzek, 1997). Characterised by the need to approach and manage environmental problems in a scientific, objective and rational manner; where nature is seen as separate from humans; knowable via scientific investigation; and ultimately manageable; this is a mode of thought with its roots firmly in the scientific revolution of the West. Pepper (1996) suggests that it is within the 'Classic Science' of the likes of Francis Bacon and the modern scientific doctrines of logical positivism that technocentrism can best be observed.

Descartes suggested that nature could be known through reductionist analysis (Harvey, 1996). By breaking nature down into component parts, ultimately, everything can be reduced to the same, measurable, basic qualities and quantities. Descartes further suggested that humans and nature are dualistic, in that nature is made up of primary qualities, an object, reducible to atoms with unthinking, mechanistic behaviour. As opposed to humans, who having a soul, are self-reflective and capable of rational thought; thus they are able to observe the subject of nature. This Cartesian Dualism sets society and nature apart, clearly portraying society as superior and suggesting a world in which humans are separate from and above nature. Later Francis Bacon affirmed that scientific knowledge equated to power over nature. He suggested that scientific activity could be seen as a philanthropic activity, whereby the scientist assumes a moral duty to improve society's material circumstances. This improvement would come from

understanding how the machine of nature worked, and the application of this knowledge to controlling nature for humanity's progress.

The methodologies and philosophies of Newtonian science, Descartes, Bacon and others were formalised into logical positivism by the Vienna Circle in the 1930s, and still form a pervasive attitude towards science, that it has the ability to solve any problem, given time. Scientific knowledge is often revered over any other form of knowledge, and especially knowledge that is obtained subjectively. This form of Enlightenment rationality underpins our continuing exploitative relationship with nature, and persistent need to maintain the Cartesian Dualism - with nature being ascribed a separate 'entity' status (Dobson, 1993; Harvey, 1996).

Both modes of thought have influenced and shaped modern environmentalism and policy making (O'Riordan, 1981). Figure 4.1 highlights these influences. Ecocentrism has been influential in terms of its natural morality, providing a set of rules for behaviour based upon the concept of limits. In addition, it is a mode of thought characterised by questions of equity and the need for democracy and participation. It also advocates the need for self-reliance and self-sufficiency. In contrast the technocentric mode has been highly influential due to its optimistic outlook. Technology has the power to overcome all problems. Political decisions can be value free if they draw upon scientific knowledge for justification; thus certain actions are tolerable when accepted and accounted for. The ideologies of both technocentrism and ecocentrism can be observed throughout the evolution of the sustainable development concept, to which the focus of this chapter now turns.

4.3.2 The Emergence of Sustainable Development Discourses

The perceived global crisis during the 1960s brought about significant changes in modes of thought and action towards the environment, nature and the agenda and practices of development. This set in motion an evolving set of discursive debates (categorised in Figure 4.2). They led from a pre-occupation with economic growth in the 1960s to a critique of such growth, especially in light of development failures, rising poverty and environmental crises.

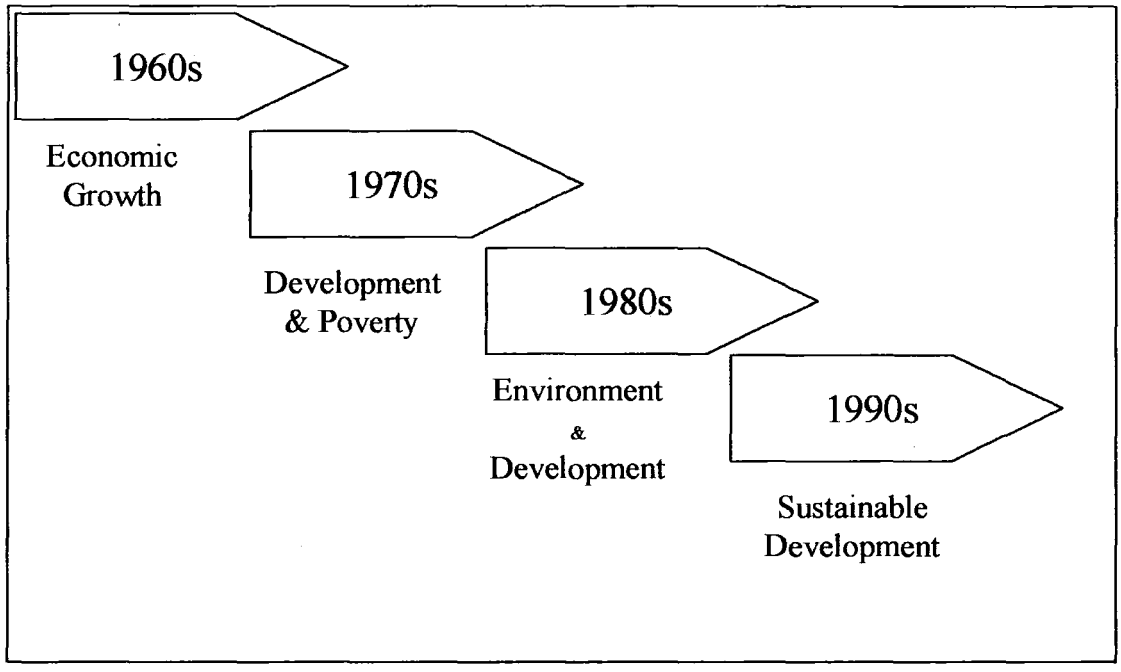

Figure 4.2. Dominant Environmental Discourses 1960s onwards

As a result, the dominant ideology and discourses of the mid 1970s were of 'limits' to growth, a finite Earth's resources and development that met 'basic needs', with the concept of sustainable development being the hegemonic discourse for environmental (and development) concerns by the 1990s. Examining some of the key steps (outlined in Table 4.1) in these processes reveals how the Brundtland definition came to be so popular, and which discourses were marginalised.

Limits to Growth 1972

By the late -1960s optimism in economic growth, as a primary tool for delivering development, had faded. Developing countries were achieving increases in GNP and yet still experiencing rising poverty, hunger, malnutrition and poor health, alongside greater world inequalities (Elliott,1994). In addition there were growing concerns over environmental degradation; resource scarcity and population growth. This led to an environmentalist critique in the form of 'no-growth' and a 'limits to growth' discourse.

The most influential[vi] interventions were the publications '*Blueprint for Survival*' and '*Limits to Growth*' in 1972. Both publications were derived from research conducted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, headed by Dennis and Donella Meadows. '*Blueprint for Survival*' was published in 1972 by the (British) magazine 'The Ecologist'; its underlying philosophy was that a continuation with the dominant trend of increasing growth would lead to,

> "the breakdown of society and the irreversible disruption of the life-support systems on this planet, possibly by the end of the century." (Ecologist, The, 1972 as cited in Reid, 1995:29)

The premise was that economic growth tended to create a need for more economic growth. *Blueprint for Survival* advocated a 'steady state' economy, which would feature resource self sufficiency, energy conservation, resource recycling, low-impact technologies, biotic rights, and a decentralised society made up of rural communities in which people would show more interest in the quality of life than increasing their material wealth (Reid, 1995). It represented a distinctly ecocentric (unlike *Limits to Growth*) and, indeed, radical, critique and analysis of the economic growth and

environment debate (Hajer, 1995). It was also the first time the term 'sustainability' had appeared as a major theme,

> "The principle defect of the industrial way of life with its ethos of expansion is that it is not sustainable."(Ecologist, The, 1972:3 as cited in Kidd, 1992:13)

Whilst 'Blueprint' caused a 'stir' in Britain, the publication of '*Limits to Growth*', in the form of a report to the Club of Rome attracted world wide attention and had an unprecedented impact upon elite opinion (Kidd, 1992; Hajer, 1995; Torgerson, 1995). '*Limits to Growth*' had distinctly Malthusian tones, and described the computational modelling of exponential growth in five (interrelated) 'global' concerns- industrialisation, population, growth, widespread malnutrition, depletion of non-renewable resources and ecological damage. All the scenarios pointed to disaster unless action is taken with regards to the global concerns modelled (Meadows *et al*, 1972). Like Malthus' work the thrust of the argument was distinctly apocalyptic.

Limits to Growth was subjected to much critique, essentially with regards to flaws in the underlying assumptions of the operation of the model (Hirsh, 1976; Simon & Kahn, 1984; Cole *et al*, 1973), and by what Dryzek (1997) describes as the Promethean response (typified by Julian Simon (1981) and Wilfred Beckerman (1994));

> "Prometheans have unlimited confidence in the ability of humans and their technologies to overcome any problems presented to them." (Dryzek, 1997:45)

The critiques notwithstanding *Limits* attracted much interest, and was extremely influential in the growing environmental debate. The works of the key contributors on the concepts of limits and the need for steady state economics were reflected in many of

the debates that took place at the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm.

Stockholm 1972

Many authors view the Stockholm conference as a 'milestone', as the first 'global' response to the environmental problems, even though it was largely Northern in perspective, focusing upon the environmental problems of industrialisation (Finger, 1993; Adams, 1990; Pezzoli, 1997). The Stockholm conference was attended by 113 nations and 500 NGOs (Adams, 1990) and published two documents (Reid, 1995) : '*The Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment*' with its 'Declaration of Human Rights' and the '*Action Plan for the Human Environment*'. Also the book '*Only One Earth*' (Ward & Dubos, 1972) was written for the conference, the ethos of which reflected the emerging ideology of a finite global ecosystem. The Conference succeeded in placing environmental problems, especially pollution, on the international political agenda (Reid,1995). The Conference established the UNEP and subsequently it was the UNEP- UNCTAD symposium that issued the Cocoyoc Declaration in 1974.

Cocoyoc Declaration 1974

The UNEP-UNCTAD symposium on the "Pattern of Resource Use, Environment and Development" was held in Cocoyoc, Mexico in 1974. The Cocoyoc Declaration provided a strong critique of development, advocating development of human beings rather than 'things'; the pursuit of self-reliance; and the avoidance of development which had adverse impacts upon local and traditional economies and cultures (Reid, 1995). Two years after this declaration the Dag Hammarskjöld Institute in Uppsala, Sweden published a report titled "What Now? Another Development", (1975) which focused

upon development and international co-operation (Reid,1995). It too was critical of the development process and suggested that there was a crisis in development, in the North as well as the South. Basic needs were not being met and many people were socially excluded. "Another Development" proposed that development should be: holistic; about satisfying needs (eradicating poverty); self-reliant and endogenous; in harmony with the environment; bring about structural change; and it could be immediate. The ideology of ecodevelopment was also made apparent within the report,

> "Ecodevelopment aims, in particular, at sustaining the yield of renewable resources and controlling the depletion of non-renewable resources so that they benefit the community as a whole. Institutionally, ecodevelopment requires close involvement of the population in decision making." (UNEP, 1978 as cited in Kidd, 1992:18)

Kidd (1992) notes the significance of using the concept of 'ecodevelopment' (equitable distribution) rather than 'no growth' with the term sustainable. He suggests that this is a reflection of the fact that developing countries, and many other development actors, were unable to find the 'limits to growth' discussions acceptable after the Stockholm conference. Hence the emergence of the term sustainability in UN literature carried no trace of this debate. Kidd suggests,

> "In short, in England, in the United States, and in the UN 'sustainability' emerged in the context of broad social, economic and political goals, rather than in the context of more narrowly defined resource management and ecological concepts." (Kidd, 1992:18)

Global Crisis (Global Problèmatique):The Key Responses

Limits to Growth (first time *Sustainability* appears as a major theme)	◦ Spaceship Earth - Boulding (1966) ◦ Entropy Law - Georgescu-Roegen (1971) ◦ Steady State Economics - Daly (1973) ◦ Tragedy of the Commons - Hardin (1968) ◦ Blueprint for Survival - Meadows et al (1972) ◦ Limits to Growth - Meadows et al (1972)
United Conference on the Human Environment 1972- Stockholm	◦ The Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment ◦ Declaration of Human Rights ◦ Action Plan for the Human Environment ◦ Only One Earth- Ward & Dubos (1972) ◦ The establishment of the United Nations Environmental Programme (based in Kenya)
UNEP-UNCTAD 1974: Pattern of Resource Use, Environment and Development Conference	◦ Cocoyoc Declaration 1974 ◦ What Now? Another Development?- Dag Hammarskjöld Institute, Sweden (1975)
World Conservation Strategy - IUCN 1980 (first time *Sustainable Development* appears as a theme)	◦ World Conservation Strategy - IUCN (1980) ◦ Follow up conference in Ottawa 1986 ◦ Caring for the Earth- IUCN (1991)
1984 UN appoint WCED - Brundtland Commission (the mainstream definition of *sustainable development* appears)	◦ 'Our Common Future'- Brundtland Report (1987)
1992 Rio 'Earth Summit' United Nations Conference on Environment & Development	◦ Rio Declaration on Environment and Development ◦ Agenda 21 ◦ Convention on Biological Diversity ◦ Framework Convention on Climate Change ◦ Statement of Principles on Forests

Table 4.1 The Evolution of Sustainability and Sustainable Development

The more complicated, and politically charged, environmental aspects of sustainability were being sidelined. By the time 'The World Conservation Strategy' (WCS) was published in 1980, by the IUCN, sustainable development had become an important part of conservationist and environmentalist thinking (Reid, 1995).

World Conservation Strategy 1980

The WCS was a distinctly environment-orientated document and defined development as,

> "the modification of the biosphere and the application of human, financial, living and non-living resources to satisfy human needs and improve the quality of human life." (IUCN, 1980:Section 1.3)

The WCS used ideas from populist critiques of development but remained largely "the child of 1970s environmentalism" (Adams, 1990:46), and the earlier conservation movement (O'Riordan, 1980; Redclift, 1987). Adams suggests that the neo-Malthusian message is clear, even if tempered and moderated. O'Riordan (1988) suggests that the WCS was 'instrumental' in the international community's focus upon the sustainable growth ideology (Kerry Turner, 1988), or as Pearce *et al* (1993) later suggested, a weak interpretation of sustainability. The WCS' three main objectives were;

- to maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems
- to preserve genetic diversity and
- to ensure the sustainable utilisation of species and ecosystems

The dualistic ideological strands of technocentrism and ecocentrism are clearly visible within the strategy (Adams, 1990; Redclift, 1987). On the one hand it,

> "takes a practical, utilitarian interest in the economic potential of ecosystems and the application of scientific knowledge to their management." (Reid, 1995:41)

and on the other it recognised the value of the biosphere,

> "we have not inherited the earth from our parents, we have borrowed it from our children." (IUCN, 1980:Section 1.5)

Critiques of the WCS made it clear that environmental responses to the global crisis had to be underpinned by an awareness of development issues, and not least their political nature (Reid, 1995; Adams, 1990). There was clearly a need to bring environment and development responses together and the IUCN recognised this in its publication *Caring for the Earth* (1991), which was the sequel to the WCS. It is within this context that the development responses of the UN independent commissions[vii] should be viewed, as whilst important documents, their proposals remained largely un-actionable. For instance, the Brandt Report recommended reviving the world economy by increasing aid to the South, and by making adjustments in the North to reduce the advantages the North enjoyed at the expense of the South (Reid, 1995). Yet very few additional transfers of funds were made. The Commission gave no attention to the concept of sustainable development. Shortly after publishing its second report (*Common Crisis*) the UN disbanded the Brandt Commission and appointed the Brundtland Commission[viii] in 1983 with the following mandate;

> "to re-examine the critical environment and development issues and to formulate realistic proposals for dealing with them." (WCED, 1987:3)

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) was an independent Commission reporting directly to the UN General Assembly (Finger, 1993). The Commission took three years to prepare and publish its report *Our Common Future* in 1987.

Brundtland 1987

The Brundtland Report of 1987 was addressed to political leaders, with the aim of structuring subsequent research and policy outcomes (Boehmer-Christiansen, 2002). It demonstrated the

first real attempt to inter-link an environmental and development response to the global crises. The WCED suggested a number of critical objectives for environment and development policies that followed from *its* conception of sustainable development (as outlined above);

- "reviving growth;
- changing the quality of growth;
- meeting essential needs for jobs, food, energy, water, and sanitation;
- ensuring a sustainable level of population;
- conserving and enhancing the resource base;
- reorienting technology and managing risk; and
- merging environment and economics in decision making"

(WCED, 1987:49)

Adams (1990:59) suggests these were "an interesting blend of environment and development concerns". Whilst Reid (1995:59) points to the significance of the order,

> "the objective most closely related to integrating environment and development is placed last, while 'reviving growth' and 'changing the quality of growth' are at the top of the list".

The WCED, itself, was quick to establish that the report is;

> "not a prediction of ever increasing environmental decay, poverty, and hardship in an ever more polluted world among ever decreasing resources. We see instead the possibility for a new era of economic growth....based on policies that sustain and expand the environmental resource base." (WCED, 1987:1)

This captures the central discursive focus: the WCED was ensuring a '*growth*' discourse. There was a distinct attempt to provide distance from the 'no-growth' doom and apocalyptic debates of the early 1970s.

The prominence of these growth objectives fuelled much of the disappointment and criticisms levelled at Brundtland (Reid, 1995; Adams, 1990). Sustainable development, for the WCED, was based upon the need to maintain and revitalise the world economy, in order to;

> "avert economic, social and environmental catastrophes." (WCED, 1987:89).

The WCED recognised that growth might apply environmental pressures but nonetheless felt that world growth should speed up. It was agreed that such environmental constraints could be respected, and indeed mitigated against (WCED, 1987). This has been described as the WCEDs attempt "to have its cake and eat it" (Adams, 1990:60). For the WCED gave no indication of how a balance between growth and environmental constraints might be struck. Adams further notes that this is rooted in a Cornucopian (technocentric) ideology, and reflects the 1960s optimism in economic development as a cure for all ills. There is, for instance, recognition that poverty in the Third World is the greatest threat to the environment, and given that economic development can alleviate poverty then it follows that it can protect the environment;

> "**Growth must be revived** in developing countries because that is where the links between economic growth, the alleviation of poverty, and environmental conditions operate most directly." (WCED, 1987:51- my emphasis)

Further evidence of technocentric underpinnings can be seen in the WCED calls for restructuring, to achieve sustainable development;

- "a political system that secures effective citizen participation in decision making
- an economic system that is able to generate surpluses and technological knowledge on a self-reliant and sustained basis,
- a social system that provides for solutions for the tensions arising from disharmonious development,
- a production system that respects the obligation to preserve the ecological base for development,
- a technological system that fosters sustainable patterns of trade and finance, and
- an administrative system that is flexible and has the capacity for self-correction.
- These requirements are more in the nature of goals that should underlie national and international action on development." (WCED, 1987:65)

It is the final statement that tempers all the rest. The WCED was in no way advocating radical structural changes, as some (ecocentric) critiques of environment and development had advocated (Reid, 1995). The report is clear that it does not provide a "blueprint for action" but instead offers a "pathway" (WCED, 1987:2). The language used is hardly a call to arms for radical global changes.

In short, Brundtland's ideological stance was distinctly technocentric. Tempered by some ecocentric ideals, such as basic needs and the equity debate, but essentially rooted in a 'business as usual' global politics or a "comfortable Keynesian reformism" (Finger, 1993:43; Adams, 1990:65). This reflects its popularity on a global scale, because it;

> "promised control over their future to both North and South, and denied fundamental conflicts between these political groups as much as between development and environment." (Boehmer-Christiansen, 2002:362)

The Brundtland report remains a 'watershed' in the history of sustainability discourse, and, as such, much current sustainable development discourse stems from it. The report marginalises the discourse of 'sustainability' in favour of the more politically acceptable 'sustainable development' (McManus, 1996). The mobilisation of this popular discourse was further strengthened at The Rio 'Earth Summit' in 1992.

The Rio 'Earth Summit' 1992

The Summit[ix] brought environmental issues to centre stage in world diplomacy[x] (Lipietz, 1995). It was the result of a two year process, supported by an UNCED secretariat. The principle objective was to address the concept of sustainable development that had been put forward by Brundtland (Patterson & Theobald, 1995). The specific aims of the process were to produce: an Earth Charter- 20 years on from the Stockholm Declaration; an Agenda 21- a

programme of action to implement the principles of such an Earth Charter by the year 2000; an agreement upon financial resources for actioning Agenda 21; and to conclude negotiations already underway on climate change, biodiversity and forests (Finger, 1993).

The outcomes of Rio can be summarised as five key agreements (see Table. 4.1). Of these agreements it is Agenda 21, a 500 page document, that has been highly influential in the mobilisation of the sustainable development discourse. Agenda 21 was to be an action plan for sustainable development into the 21st century, with a view to integrating the goals of environmental protection and economic development, and based on local community and free market principles (Reid, 1995). It included ideals that were particularly democratic and egalitarian, such as the need to action at the local level (Levett, 1993; Patterson & Theobald, 1995). Within the report Chapter 28 *Local Authorities - Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21* suggests that local authorities will have a key role, due to their operations, in delivering sustainable development and required them to produced a local action plan (a Local Agenda 21- LA21) to achieve this,

> "Each local authority should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organizations and private enterprises and adopt "a local Agenda 21". Through consultation and consensus-building, local authorities would learn from citizens and from local, civic, community, business and industrial organizations and acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies. The process of consultation would increase household awareness of sustainable development issues. (Quarrie, 1992:28.3)

Clearly, the aim of LA21 was to bring the notion of 'sustainable development' into the local forum via a series of activities. Agenda 21 specified that most local authorities, world wide, should have achieved a consensus on a LA21 by the year 1996. The LA21 initiative was co-ordinated globally by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and in the UK was managed by the Local Government Management Board (LGMB). In 1993

the LGMB produced a *Framework for Local Sustainability*, which stressed that LA21 was a process, not a set of events, that could include activities within and outwith the local authority (see Table 4.2).

Action within the Local Authority	1. Managing and improving the local authority's own environmental performance
	2. Integrating sustainable development aims into the local authority's policies and activities
Action in the Wider Community	3. Awareness raising and education
	4. Consulting and involving the general public
	5. Partnerships
	6. Measuring, monitoring and reporting on progress towards sustainability

Table 4.2 Key areas of action in the UK Local Agenda 21 process (Source: Selman, 1996:102 abridged)

In 1999 the LA21 advisor at the LGMB suggested that surveys conducted revealed 77% of all UK local authorities claimed to have produced a LA21 strategy, or would do so by 2000 (Morris, 1999). Whilst the initial uptake of the process was slow, a considerable number of innovative measures, projects and processes associated with LA21 have been introduced by local authorities across the UK (Agyeman & Evans, 1995; LMGB, 1997; Selman, 1996). Given the lack of a prescribed model there has been a degree of experimentation (Freeman *et al*, 1996). The majority of LA21 initiatives, however, have tended to fall within the remit traditionally associated with environmental issues, such as planning, open spaces and so on; with much less attention being focused upon the interrelationship with economic development (Gibbs *et al*, 1998). This has been heightened by the ghettoisation of LA21 to departments with environmental responsibilities (Bond *et al*, 1998; Groves, 2000).

Local Agenda 21 has been an important element of establishing sustainable development within mainstream public and policy discourses. For some local authorities it offered an

opportunity to explore new forms of governance, re-appraising participatory structures and developing new ways of working with the community (Freeman *et al*, 1996; Patterson & Theobald, 1995). LA21 is an explicitly community-based idea, with its notions of participation, increased democracy and equity (this is also reflected in moves towards tackling social exclusion and regeneration in the UK - see section 5.4.2.3). Agenda 21 specifically called for the inclusion of traditionally under-represented groups such as women and youth (Quarrie, 1992:28.2). The processes of inclusionary and democratic governance have, however, been less than successful with these groups in some local authority approaches to LA21 (Buckingham-Hatfield, 1994; Buckingham-Hatfield & Matthews, 1997; Freeman, 1997). Indeed, research by Evans & Percy (1997) found that many officers working in the field of LA21 had a number of misconceptions of the concepts of capacity building, empowerment and participation.

Whilst the processes of UNCED and its associated Agenda 21 have been subjected to a number of critiques (see Finger, 1993), the Local Agenda 21 initiative has been particularly fundamental to introducing a new lexicon to local policy discourses. In addition calls for governments to produce national sustainable development strategies have also had an impact upon policy discourse (Quarrie, 1992). But it remains the Brundtland notion of sustainable development, and its many, often technocentric, interpretations that are being mobilised through such policy discourses. The next section provides an outline of these wide interpretations before subsequent sections address how sustainable development is being operationalised by certain actors and agencies.

4.4 The 'Grand Puzzle' of Sustainability

The previous sections have traced the evolution of the concepts sustainability and sustainable development and found them to be situated, at numerous points in time, within global, yet essential Western, environment and development debates (see Figure 4.2). The exploration revealed the structures within which the concepts have evolved and found them to be highly politicised, elitist and distinctly economic. The publication of the Brundtland report can be seen as a key point, in a longer process (see Table 4.1), to the marginalisation of sustainability discourses, such as no-growth (McManus, 1996), in favour of the more popular sustainable development concept.

This chapter has demonstrated how the 'grand puzzle' of sustainability (Pezzoli, 1997), with its variety of discourses, can be pieced together using the technocentric and ecocentric ideologies as underpinnings[xi]. The concept is multi-dimensional, not only economic and ecological, but simultaneously also political, social, cultural, geographical, spatial, scientific, technological and temporal, that mix together to form a 'grand' puzzle (Redclift, 1992; Munro, 1995; Luke, 1999). Figure 4.3 illustrates the complexity of sustainability. The labels used within this figure are by no means mutually exclusive, there is a considerable overlap for a number, if not all. The figure demonstrates how sustainability can be constructed: what its constituent parts might be. The blend used, however, will be dependant upon the context and the actors involved (Sneddon, 2000). It is not surprising then that the most commonly used interpretation is essentially economic. For instance, Escobar (1996) suggests that 'nature' has been reinvented as environment in the sustainable development discourse, such that it is 'capital' that may be maintained (see also O'Connor, 1994). And the recognition that 'nature'

is no longer everywhere, limitless and externally available to capitalist actors has led to a shift whereby nature has become an accumulation strategy for capital (Katz, 1998).

The mainstream interpretation of sustainable development, drawn from Brundtland, is commonly outlined by economists such as Pearce *et al* (1989, 1993) and Atkinson *et al* (1997). They suggest that the rationale for sustainable development is,

> "to raise the standard of living - and especially the standard of living of the least advantaged in society - while at the same time avoiding uncompensated future costs." (Pearce *et al*, 1993:7)

where uncompensated future costs would include environmental degradation or natural resource loss. To them this represents an exercise in 'sustainable *economic* development', which most economists interpret to mean continuously rising, or at least non-declining, GNP (or the appropriately agreed indicator of development). Atkinson *et al* (1997) suggest this can be viewed, simply, as non-declining human well-being over time; whereby

> "any society wishing to pursue intergenerational justice defined in these terms must develop in such a ways as to minimise those activities whose costs are borne by future generations. Where such costs are unavoidable, due allowance must be made for compensating future generations for the costs imposed." (Atkinson *et al*, 1997:16)

Both accept that this is open to 'weak' and 'strong' interpretations- see Figure 4.4 (Pearce *et al*, 1989, 1993; Atkinson, 1997). The weakest interpretation requires that overall capital stock, which are defined as the aggregate of man-made and natural capital, does not decline, and substitution is acceptable (even desirable). The suggestion is that each generation is 'indifferent' to the form in which it passes capital stock onto the next generation, thus one generation can pass on less natural stock if it has offset this loss by increasing a stock in man-

made capital (Pearce *et al*, 1993:16). The environment, in this interpretation, has no 'special place' it is merely another form of capital.

Whereas the 'strong' interpretation advocates a minimum requirement for at least parts of the natural capital stock to be maintained, because the limit to which substitution between natural and man-made assets is possible is recognised. Some natural assets are essential to human well-being and survival; Pearce *et al* suggest that these may be designated critical natural capital.. The 'strong' sustainability interpretation has two stances with regards to natural capital. Firstly, and most 'strongly' it advocates general conservation of natural capital. Secondly, less 'strong', it requires protection of critical natural capital, and may or may not advocate general conservation. Pearce *et al* argue that reasons for adopting the 'strong' interpretation include the fact that there is 'uncertainty' about the way in which natural capital stock works, we do not have a full understanding of the ecological system; hence decisions should be made with a 'precautionary' approach. The 'precautionary principle' requires action to be taken now to avoid possible future impacts even if the scientific evidence for doing so is uncertain or inconclusive (Blowers & Glasbergen, 1995; Hinchcliffe, 2001).

The mainstream discourse of sustainable development quite possibly represents a victory in a discursive battle, where mainstream economists are relying upon the "standard tools and assumptions of neo-classical growth theory" (Ayres, 1998:135) to address issues of sustainability (Jacobs, 1991:1993). As such then these interpretations are often "indistinguishable from the notion of continuing economic growth" (Ayres, 1998:135). Adams suggests that,

> "within mainstream sustainable development discourse, therefore, there are no ideological conflicts with the dominant capitalist industrialising model, only debates about methods and priorities." (Adams, 1995a:90)

Not only does the mainstream interpretation rely upon traditional economic theory, it takes a utilitarian view of science that is core to technocentric thinking (Adams, 1995a). Considerable faith is placed in the application of science to solve problems. Thus the current mantra of sustainable development is technocentric and inherently reformist. It tends to fit comfortably and conveniently with a technical administration that advocates a cautious incremental approach and a steady advancement of industrialisation (Torgerson, 1995). The marginalised, or alternative, discourses of sustainability do, however, offer some potential to challenge and disrupt this dominant public discourse. These debates have distinct implications for policy formation and delivery, discussed below.

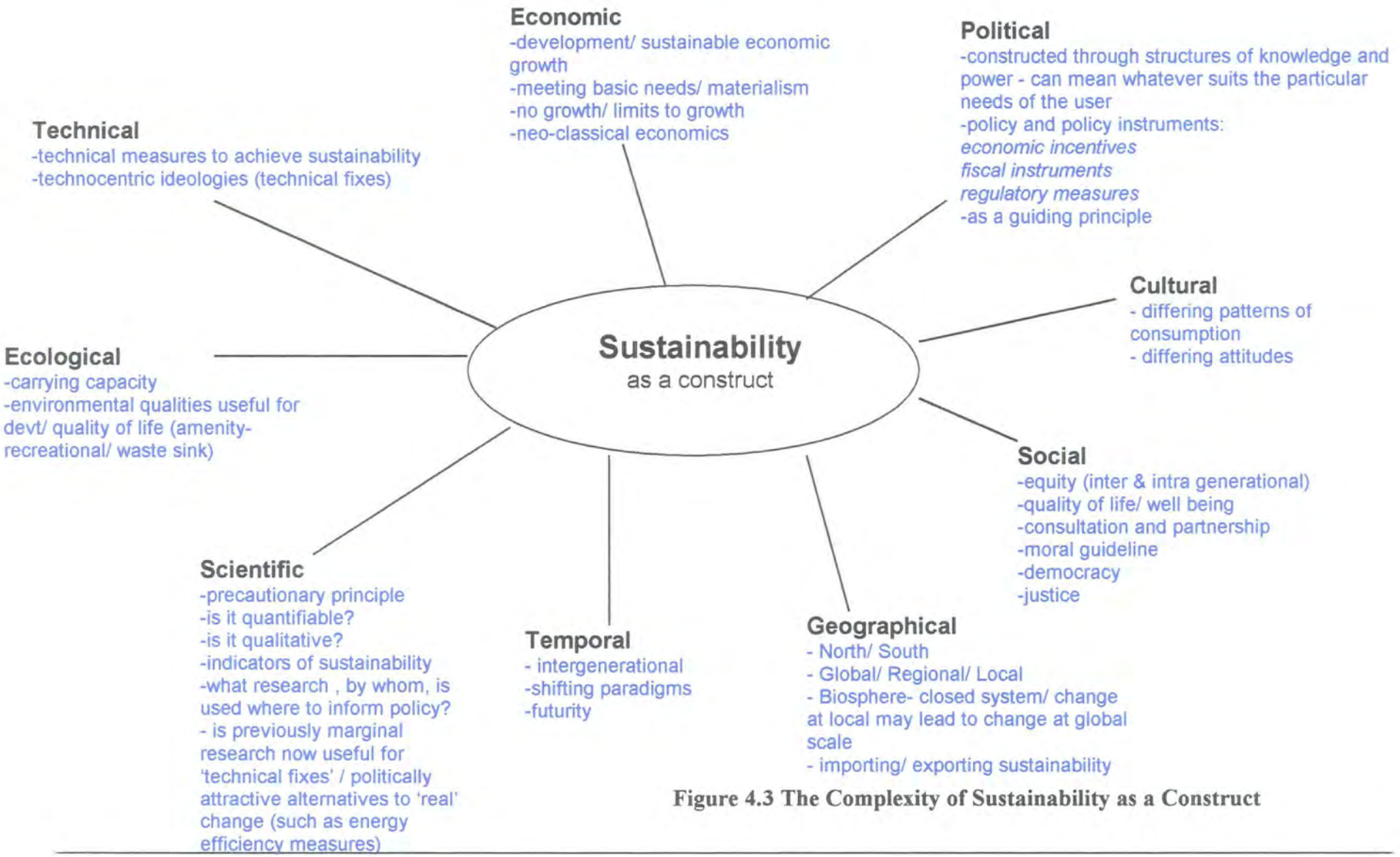

Figure 4.3 The Complexity of Sustainability as a Construct

	TECHNOCENTRIC		ECOCENTRIC	
	Cornucopian	**Accommodating**	**Communalist**	**Deep Ecology**
Green labels	Resource exploitative, growth-orientated position	Resource conservationist and 'managerial' position	Resource preservationist position	Extreme preservationist position
Type of Economy	Anti-green economy, unfettered free markets	Green economy, green markets guided by economic incentive instruments (e.g. pollution charges etc.)	Deep green economy, steady-state economy regulated by macro-environmental standards and supplemented by economic incentive instruments	Very deep green economy, heavily regulated to minimise 'resource-take'
Management Strategies	Primary economic policy objective, maximise economic growth (GNP)	Modified economic growth (adjusted green accounting to measure GNP)	Zero economic growth; zero population growth	Reduced scale of economy and population
	Taken as axiomatic that unfettered free markets in conjunction with technical progress will ensure infinite substitution possibilities capable of mitigating all 'scarcity/ limits' constraints (environmental sources and sinks)	Decoupling important but infinite substitution rejected. Sustainability rules: constant capital rule	Decoupling plus no increases in scale. 'Systems' perspective- 'health' of whole ecosystems very important; Gaia hypothesis and implications	Scale reduction imperative; at the extreme for some there is a literal interpretation of Gaia as a personalised agent to which moral obligations are owed
Ethics	Support for traditional ethical reasoning: rights and interests of contemporary individual humans; instrumental value (i.e. of recognised value to humans) in nature	Extension of ethical reasoning: 'caring for others' motive- intragenerational and intergenerational equity (i.e. contemporary poor and future people); instrumental value in nature	Further extension of ethical reasoning: interests of the collective take precedence over those of the individual; primary value of ecosystems and secondary value of component functions and services	Acceptance of bioethics (i.e. moral rights/ interests conferred on all non-human species and even the abiotic parts of the environment); intrinsic value of nature (i.e. valuable in its own right regardless of human experience)
		Blueprint View		
Sustainability Labels	**Very weak sustainability**	**Weak sustainability**	**Strong sustainability**	**Very strong sustainability**

Figure 4.4. The Sustainability Spectrum (Source Pearce *et al*, 1993:18-19)

4.5 Sustainability and Policy

Many authors feel the greatest challenge for sustainability and sustainable development is not to provide definitions but to ensure the ideology is operationalised as an overarching goal or criterion for attitudes, practices, policy and more generally society (Blowers, 1997; Holmberg & Sandbrook, 1992; Trzyna, 1995). Yet given the various interpretations of sustainability there will inevitably be variety (and confusion) in the implementation of the concept. All too often it can be observed that,

> "Chambers of commerce and ministries of industry in the 1990s glibly adopt sustainable development discourse as their own: this dam, that factory, these highways, those power lines must be built to sustain, not nature, but job creation, population growth, industrial output or service delivery." (Luke, 1999:139)

The concepts may be used by many for their own purposes. Little attention, however, has been given to the "politics of policy" when engaging issues of 'the environment' within the policy forum (Hinchcliffe, 2001:186). The application of sustainability ideologies to policy requires policy makers to address some particularly difficult and sometimes controversial questions. Luke (1999:139-140), for instance, suggests that as a social goal sustainability is fraught with a number of unresolved questions, such as sustainable for how long, at what level, for whom and sustainable development of what? Answers to these questions will invariably be context specific, usually serving the interests of the economically powerful (Blowers & Glasbergen, 1995). The answers can be seen as cuts or incisions upon what matters, and consequently, what does not matter (Hinchcliffe, 2001).

Given that technocentrism is the dominant discourse of sustainability, it is likely that weak interpretations of sustainability will be the norm (Gibbs *et al*, 1998; Gibbs, 1997). Such

technocentric thinking will require policy to be reformist, pragmatic and utilitarian, such that this kind of policy will fail to address political and economic structures,

> "environmental campaigns premised on technical explanations of unsustainability only call for technical changes.....In contrast, a socio-ecological politics calls for transforming the social relations and structures that cause unsustainability." (Hartman, 1998:348-9)

Ecocentrically ideological policy would advocate fundamental changes in political and economic structures (Adams, 1990), which will require us to re-examine our priorities, whether they be economic, social or ecological. This is an extremely unattractive task for politics;

> "people are hardly likely to forego the enjoyment of comfortable lifestyles, however unsustainable in the long run, if the consequences are unclear and uncertain." (Blowers & Glasbergen, 1995:176).

Munton (1997) further suggests that mobilising support for environmental concerns is difficult when the world is full of many other uncertainties, such as job security, declining welfare provision and so on. People prefer to identify with local concerns and their own lived experiences.

A number of recent studies have examined sustainable development and policy discourses (Myerson & Rydin, 1996a&b). Gibbs *et al* (1998) examined local authority policy with an aim of identifying discourses as technocentric (weak) or ecocentric (strong) interpretations of sustainability. Their findings illustrated that the majority of policy could be described as 'weak' interpretations of sustainability, quite specifically drawn from Brundtland sustainable development ideologies.

In previous research Gibbs *et al* (1996) suggested that planning and environment departments seem to have a much more dominant role in taking sustainable development forward than economic development departments. This is echoed in the work of numerous researchers addressing the importance of land use planning, including plans, policy and the planners themselves, in the mobilisation of sustainability (Evans, 1997; Owens, 1997: Counsell, 1998; Briassoulis, 1999; Bruff & Wood, 2000). Briassoulis suggests that,

> "no planning and policy document omits the term [sustainable development] anymore." (Briassoulis, 1999:889)

To examine the popularity of the term, and its interpretation, within policy the following sections identify the current UK strategy on sustainable development and the ways in which the land use planning system is permeated by the term and its ideologies[xii].

4.5.1 UK Strategy for Sustainable Development

The UK's sustainable development strategy was first outlined in the Command Paper '*Sustainable Development Strategy*' published in 1994. The present Government undertook a review of this strategy and published its consultation paper *'Opportunities for Change'* (DETR,1998d). Subsequently, in 1999, the Command paper '*A Better Quality of Life*' was published (DETR, 1999a). The Paper claims that sustainable development,

> "At its heart is the simple idea of ensuring a **better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come**". (DETR, 1999a:8- original emphasis)

Yet whilst the idea is simple, it claims, the task is substantial, and requires meeting the following objectives simultaneously;

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- effective protection of the environment
- prudent use of natural resources

- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. (DETR, 1999a:8)

To achieve sustainable development, it is acknowledged that a holistic approach is required. The onus is upon avoiding the pursuit of individual objectives, such as short-term economic growth, without considering the consequences - long term as well as short; indirect as well as direct; and paying attention to the possible irreversibility of developments (DETR, 1999). As such the paper relies heavily upon discourses that stem from the Brundtland Commission.

The proposed strategy for sustainable development permeates much of Government policy and guidance, as by definition this is an integral part of the vision. The prominence of sustainability within Land Use Planning, for instance, is examined in the following section. In addition, Chapter 5 analyses the role of sustainable development within regeneration policy in the UK.

4.5.2 Sustainable Land Use Planning in the UK

The UK planning system requires local planning authorities to pay attention to current planning policy guidance notes (PPG's) in preparing their development plans and in decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. *PPG 1: General Policy and Principles* sets out a strategic commentary on planning policy. It clearly highlights sustainable development, along with mixed use and design, as the main themes which underpin the Government's approach to the planning system. The contribution of the planning system to achieving sustainable development is outlined, as such;

"A sustainable planning framework should:

- provide for the nation's needs for commercial and industrial development, food production, minerals extraction, new homes and other buildings, while respecting environmental objectives;

- use already developed areas in the most efficient way, while making them more attractive places in which to live and work;
- conserve both the cultural heritage and natural resources (including wildlife, landscape, water, soil and air quality) taking particular care to safeguard designations of national and international importance; and
- shape new development patterns in a way which minimises the need to travel to work."

(DOE, 1997: 5)

Throughout PPG1, local planning authorities are advised to integrate transport and land use policies to secure sustainable development, hence their policies should,

- reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys;
- encourage alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact; and hence
- reduce reliance on the private car.

The key objectives for the planning system are to:

- influence the location of different types of development relative to transport (and vice versa); and
- foster forms of development which encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.

(DOE, 1997: 23)

Overall PPG1 demonstrates the Government's developing commitment and approach to its Sustainable Development strategy, which is also embodied in the White Paper '*A New Deal for Transport*'- see below (DETR, 1998a). PPG1 outlines an approach to planning which is aimed at containing the dispersal of development and hence reducing the need to travel and improving access to jobs, leisure and services.

4.5.3 Sustainable Transport

In July 1998 the Government outlined a long-term strategy to deliver sustainable transport within the White Paper on Transport: '*A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone*' (DETR, 1998a). The paper described a framework for change, which included numerous objectives[xiii] that essentially promoted the need for better planning in order to reduce the need to travel. In addition, it identified improving access to workplaces and facilities and

promoting the use of public transport. Given that the land use planning system was integral to the implementation of the White paper's strategies, the Transport Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 follows in a similar vein, and provides guidance to enable local authorities to carry out land-use policies that help to;

- reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys;
- encourage alternative means of travel which have less environmental impacts; and hence
- reduce reliance on the private car

(DOE/DOT, 1994)

The focus lies squarely with reducing the need for journeys and the use of the private car.

4.6 Summary

There is a distinction between sustainability and sustainable development. Sustainable development has evolved to be the mainstream ideology outlining concern for issues of environmentalism and 'development', whereas sustainability implies a stronger commitment to the environment above other factors, and in particular economic growth (Agyeman & Evans, 1994).

> "Is sustainable development discourse anything more than an eco-knowledge of/by/for the modern capitalist mode of production, which became fully transnational in scope and impact only during the 1960s." (Luke, 1999:138)

In reviewing the concept of sustainability and exploring an archaeology of knowledge as to the popularisation of sustainability discourse this chapter demonstrated that the answer to the above question has considerable poignancy. It is important to be aware of the social constructionist implications of the discourses of sustainability and that a variety of discourses and interpretations exist. Dominant discourses have tended to evolve out of a discursive struggle,

> "different conceptions of nature get evoked for quite different political and substantive purposes within the overall flow of conflictual social action." (Harvey, 1996:174)

this chapter suggested that this discursive struggle was situated in the responses to the perceived global crisis of the 1960s. Out of these responses a dominant technocentric reaction and discourse evolved. Other discourses of sustainability, however, are available via the ecocentric ideology. For instance, a central concern for sustainability is the possibility of 'limits to growth' and it may not be possible to continue along the conventional path of 'progress' (Torgerson, 1995; McManus, 1996).

Sneddon (2000) argues that diverse actors might use 'sustainability' (as opposed to the defunct 'sustainable development') as a starting point for interrogating traditional approaches to environmental problems. He suggests that work being conducted in the fields of ecological economics, the natural sciences and alternative development practices can be useful in this process. In particular decision makers may not incorporate eco-knowledge into their policy formations, and understanding why this occurs is an important element of progressing the 'sustainability' ideal. The interpretation of sustainability into policy (or even the lack of sustainability in policy and practice) can be usefully examined from a social constructionist stance. By considering what claim to sustainability the policy makes/does not make, who is making the claim, and to what end are they making the claim one hopes to reveal the power struggles that are taking place at the contextual level.

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[i] Sustainability is defined as "the quality of being sustainable" where sustainable means "supportable, bearable; able to be upheld or defended; able to be maintained at a certain rate or level" (Oxford English Dictionary).

[ii] See Sachs (1992 & 2000) and Norgaard (1994) for a detailed discussion of the discourses of development.

[iii] The phrase was first used in the World Conservation Strategy in 1980. Then galvanised into a definition in the Brundtland Report in 1987 and further postulated into policy agendas during subsequent global forums, such as the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (Trzyna, 1995; Pezzoli, 1997).

[iv] Alternative frames for examining the discourses of nature exist such as: the anthropocentric / biocentric coloured spectrum of green thought (Wissenburg,1993); whilst Dryzek (1997) suggests a framework of four basic environmental discourses, and associated debates: global limits and their denial; solving environmental problems; the quest for sustainability and green radicalism.

[v] Charles Darwin is also an important figure in the evolutionary history of ecocentrism (Pepper, 1996).

[vi] Space does not allow for a discussion of the work of others which were also influential, such as the work of economists like Boulding (1966)- Spaceship Earth; Daly (1973)- Steady State Economics; Georgescu-Roegen (1971)- Entropy Law; and Hardin (1968)- Tragedy of the Commons.

vii In 1977 the UN appointed the Brandt Commission to examine International Development Issues and in 1980 the Palme Commission to address Disarmament & Security Issues.

[viii] So named after the Chairperson, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway.

[ix] Also know as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

[x] The Summit took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. It lasted 12 days and was attended by 116 heads of state, 172 states, 8000 delegates, 9000 members of the press and 3000 NGO representatives (Pezolli, 1997).

[xi] Other structures have been used to describe the sustainability spectrum for instance, Dryzek (1997); McManus (1996); Munro (1995); and Pezzoli (1997).

[xii] A fuller discussion can be found in Munton (1997).

[xiii] White Paper on Transport: *'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone'* (DETR, 1998a), objectives included:

- improving reliability for journeys in all modes, helping to support business and economic growth;
- supporting regeneration and vitality of urban and rural areas;
- making more efficient use of the transport system;
- reducing road traffic growth
- minimising transport's demand for land, protect habitats and maintain the variety of wildlife;
- ensuring that environmental impacts are taken fully into account in investment decisions and in the price of transport;
- enhancing public awareness of transport and environmental issues
- producing better public transport and easier access to workplaces and other everyday facilities for all, especially people on low incomes;
- reducing the need to travel through better planning and technology.

5.1 Industrial Decline and Regeneration

This chapter explores the processes by which areas, such as former coalfields, have come to face such severe economic, social and environmental issues, and the policy (past and present) that has been employed to tackle such problems. To understand the processes of decline and the possibilities of 'regeneration' within coalfields, it is important to frame the issues within a wider context. The first section outlines the national, supranational and global contexts that have shaped the decline of the coalfields, and framed policies aimed at regeneration. In order to undertake this task it is necessary to draw upon a number of concepts that help to explain patterns of uneven development, that result from the capitalist mode of production (Smith, 1990), and the processes of de-industrialisation (Hudson, 1995). The chapter then highlights these processes in the coal industry before examining the ways in which regeneration has been deployed as a 'solution' to the problems faced in areas, such as the coalfields. Finally, the chapter critically comments upon the circulation and variety of regeneration discourses.

5.2. Economic Geographies: local economies and their global context

Since the mid-1970s, most Western industrialised countries including the UK have undergone an evolving process of economic and social restructuring (Martin & Townroe, 1992; Allen, 1988). This has led to a 'new' phase of uneven economic development (Massey, 1995). Processes have occurred, and are continuing to occur, which have had significant effects on the geography of socio-economic inequality in the UK. Amin (1994:1) describes this period as,

> "a transition from one distinct phase of capitalist development to a new phase".

Many suggest that the period from the end of World War Two until the mid 1970s can be classified as the period of Fordism, and that changes from the mid 1970s reflect a crisis in Fordism and a transition to post-Fordism (Parry, 1996; Amin, 1994; Peck & Tickell, 1994). This classification, however, has been much debated, with some seeking deeper analysis of the situation in terms of local variation and patterns of uneven development (see for instance Jessop, 1995). For the purposes of this discussion, however, the typologies hold useful explanatory powers.

Amin (1994) suggests that there are three theoretical positions that lie at the heart of the post-Fordist debate: the Regulation Approach, the flexible specialization approach and the neo-Schumpeterian approach. He claims that all three offer a framework to substantiate the claim that,

> "an era of mass production (or Fordism) is under challenge, and portends to give way to a new set of organizational principles if a new long wave economic growth is to be secured and sustained." (Amin, 1994:6)

Space here does not allow for a detailed consideration of these models, the aim, moreover, is to provide a framework for which to view the changing nature of the coal industry; its 'crisis'; and possible solutions to that 'crisis', in light of this period of transition. The Regulation Approach offers considerable explanatory power in this sense,

> "regulationists typically regard the structure of capitalist economies as a complex ensemble of social relations comprising an accumulation regime embedded in a social structure of accumulation; and they analyse accumulation dynamics as a complex process consisting in the self-valorisation of capital in and through regulation." (Jessop, 1995:1614)

Thus, in economic terms, it is claimed that, there has been a transition from Fordist to post-Fordist (or industrial to post-industrial) modes of production. The Fordist regime of

accumulation was associated with mass production; inflexibility; dedicated machinery; a Taylorist de-skilling of jobs and division of labour; and a reliance upon the exploitation of internal scale economies (Hudson, 1995; Jessop, 1995; Parry, 1996). This was accompanied by, and closely inter-related to, the Keynesian welfare state. This mode of governance saw the involvement of the state as *central* to ensuring macro-economic growth and enabling social justice, via a redistribution of income and wealth (Hudson & Weaver, 1997). The aim was to secure full employment (a full-time job, for life, for male workers) within national economies. This was achieved through the application of demand side management. Whilst each national case varies, typical forms of the Keynesian welfare state are characterised by their approaches to economic and social intervention, which were largely liberal, corporatist and statist (Jessop, 1994b).

From the mid-1960s onwards the fragility of this mode of regulation was increasingly recognised, and described as crisis-prone. It was increasingly recognised that nation states could no longer maintain full employment (Hudson & Weaver, 1997), and were also unable to maintain the levels of investment in Keynesian welfare state policies. Jessop (1994a) suggests that this 'crisis' in Fordism, and transition to post-Fordism, was driven by the rise of new technologies and internationalisation. Essentially, the growing competition placed on capitalist economies by newly industrialised countries and advanced capitalist economies (particularly Japan and the USA) led to a need for state action to encourage new technological applications in the pursuit of greater competitiveness (Jessop, 1994a; Hudson & Weaver, 1997). With the continued growth of Globalisation, and market liberalisation, states could no longer act as if national economies were closed. Hudson & Weaver (1997) suggest that state intervention was

increasingly seen as a contributing factor to, rather than part of the solution of, poor national economic performance. The resultant effect was a shift to 'post'-Fordism.

The transition from Fordism to a period 'after' Fordism can be seen as a symptom of the crisis in Fordism (Peck & Tickell, 1994). The 'crisis' in Fordism and the Keynesian Welfare state gave rise to changes, and experimentation, in labour processes, accumulation regimes, and social modes of economic regulation. The nature of post-Fordism, and this transitional phase, has been well debated elsewhere (see for instance Amin, 1994; Jessop, 1994a&b; Jessop, 1995). Briefly, however, it can be noted that Post-Fordism is characterised by flexible methods of production and industrial organisation (flexible specialisation); and a new set of enabling institutions for restructuring (Painter, 1995). As a result new sociologies and geographies of industrial organization have emerged (Amin, 1994). In addition, Jessop (1994a) suggests that there has been a shift to a Schumpeterian workfare state, with a 'hollowing out' of the state;

> "for whilst the nation-state still remains politically significant....its capacities to project its power even within its own national borders are decisively weakened both by the shift towards internationalised, flexible (but also regionalised) production systems and by the growing challenge posed by risks emanating from the global environment. This loss of autonomy creates in turn both the need for supra-national coordination and the space for subnational resurgence. Thus we find that the powers of nation-states are being limited through a complex displacement of powers upward, downward, and outward." (Jessop, 1994b:24)

This new state form is associated with economic and social reproduction objectives that reflect supply side intervention in the national economy to strengthen its structural competitiveness and a productivist re-ordering of social policy, to meet the needs of

labour market flexibility (Jessop, 1994b). It is within this context of transition that the decline of the coal industry can be framed.

5.3 Industrial Decline & Restructuring: Processes and Problems in the Coal Industry

The past four decades have been a period of increasing de-industrialisation in many capitalist economies. Since the mid 1970s, in particular, areas that were the origins of industrial capitalism have been especially prone to decline and de-industrialisation (Hudson, 1994). These older industrial areas were characterised by large scale mining and manufacturing, with high levels of employment in these sectors. They reflected the pursuance of Fordist accumulation regimes. It is not important, however, whether the coal industry itself is an example, *per se*, of Fordism , what is of importance is that coal was once a large industry that fuelled the Fordist period of mass production and consumption, and as that regime of accumulation shifted so did the prioritisation of the industry, within a national perspective;

> "For older industrial regions, the counter-tendencies of ageing infrastructure, obsolete production technologies and methods and the cost of labour mean that they are likely to be abandoned as capitalism seeks more productive sites." (Parry, 1996:5-6)

In addition the shift from the Keynesian welfare state to a Schumpeterian workfare state resulted in changing patterns of governance, politics and policy towards the coalfields, which in turn played significant roles in their decline and any efforts aimed at mitigating such decline. The uneven nature of the spatial inequalities, resultant from the impacts of global economies on local economies, were increasingly evident in coalfield areas.

The decline of the coal industry has been felt on an intensely localised level. Indeed coal mining areas provide an exemplar situation of the broader processes of industrial decline and its consequences in the UK (Beynon & Hudson, 1997). No other industry has seen decline on such a scale, nor felt the consequences of that decline at such a localised level (The Coalfields Task Force, 1998). Coates & Barratt Brown (1997), suggest that British economic history has few examples of such a concentrated shock to the economy as the loss of income due to the pit closures. The following section explores the parameters of the decline of the British coal industry, within the context of de-industrialisation and Globalisation.

5.3.1 The Great British Coal Industry

The British coal industry was once the largest in the world (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997). The industry emerged at a rapid pace during the first half of the 19th century; between 1830 and 1880 the annual output rose from 23 million tonnes to 147 millions tonnes (Waddington & Parry, 1995). The industry's domination grew as coal became Britain's primary industrial energy source. In 1913, the industry's peak year, output was nearing 290, 000 million tonnes per annum; with 3,000 pits in operation, employing just over one million miners. Since this peak, however, the industry has undergone severe change culminating in, what some describe as, the 'meltdown' or 'decimation' of the industry (see Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997). This process of decline is framed within specific changing economic patterns and political processes. The following sections explore the historical context within which these patterns and processes occurred, starting with the post war period and the nationalisation of the industry.

5.3.1.1 The coal industry from 1947-1979

During the inter-war years the coal industry suffered the effects of cyclical trade depressions. Almost one quarter of all insured miners were unemployed in 1934 (Allen, 1981). The 1944 White Paper on Employment Policy placed particular emphasis upon ensuring that the unemployment problems of the inter-war did not repeat themselves in the 'special areas' (Hudson & Sadler, 1985). In 1947 the industry was nationalised and the National Coal Board (NCB) was established. There was much optimism for the future security of the coal industry, and planned energy policy[i] (Waddington & Parry, 1995). Public ownership was seen as a means of guaranteeing job security (for the 700,000 employees in Britain's 980 pits) and ensuring against the uncertainties that coalfield communities had previously been subjected to. Nationalisation was about managing the industry for the good of the nation and on behalf of the people (Beynon *et al*, 1991).

The nationalisation of the industry should also be set against the backdrop of the growth of the Keynesian welfare state. The post war years saw an expansion of state activity and the construction of a welfare state, including, for example, health care, education and public housing (Jessop, 1995). This growth in the Keynesian welfare state bought with it a sense of national security; the notion of 'jobs for life'; and a bid to eradicate poverty and inequality (Hudson & Williams, 1995). Coalfield areas, and other old industrial areas, developed a 'culture of dependency' on the state; with the state and politicians doing things *for* people (Hudson, 1994). This 'political' culture was reinforced at the local level through active participation in the trade unions of the industry. This would have significant implication for the coalfield communities when industrial decline began, and ultimately removed all jobs in coal mining from many areas of the UK.

After nationalisation in 1947 the NCB spent the following ten years eliminating smaller, less viable pits; by 1957 it had closed 158 mines (Waddington & Parry, 1995). In addition, state policy actively discouraged economic diversification within the coalfields, in order to protect the supply of labour for mass production (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997). During the late 1950s coal started to lose its 'crown' to oil, with demand for coal failing dramatically (Hall, 1981). Figure 5.1 clearly illustrates the declining output, employment and number of collieries, with the dramatic falls occurring in the late 1950s and on into the 1960s. Between 1957 and 1969, for instance, there were 378,000 job losses in the industry, and over 500 colliery closures (some of the job losses were, however, a result of increasing mechanisation) (Waddington & Parry, 1995).

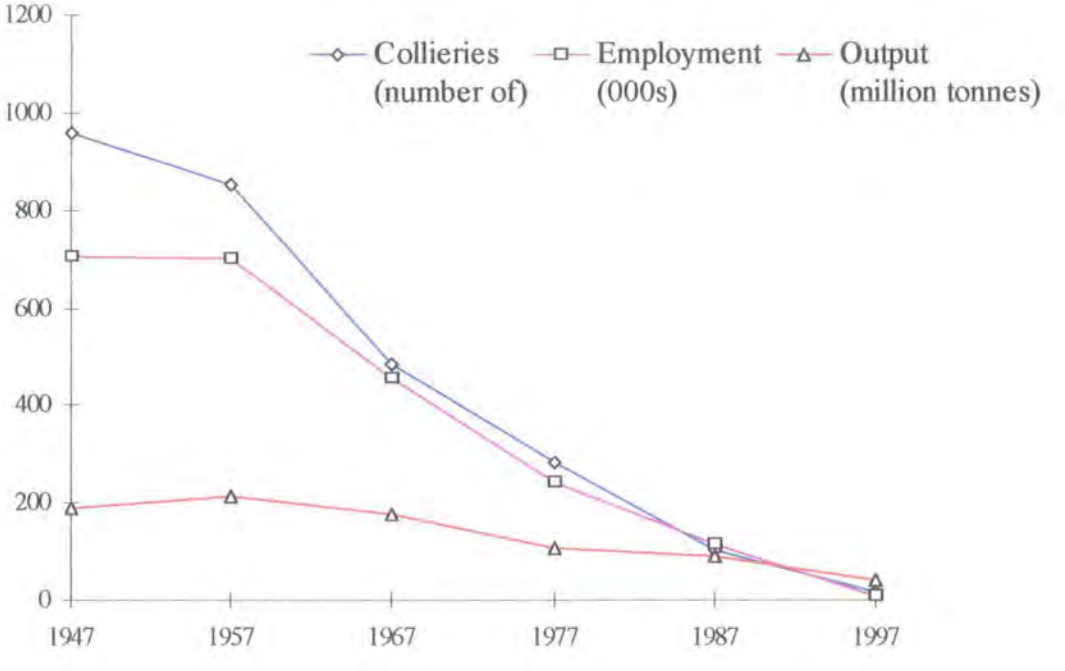

Figure 5.1 Decline of the Coal Industry in the UK 1947-1997 (Source: Bennett *et al*, 2000:3)

The closures were largely uncontested, with management encouraging attitudes of fatalism amongst the work force and trade unions, suggesting that oil was cheaper than coal, therefore coal demand should fall (Allen, 1981). By the 1970s, however, union officials and activists had mobilised to form opposition to the pit closures (Waddington & Parry, 1995). There were national strikes in 1972 and 1974. Indeed, the 1970s saw something of a short reprieve for the industry in the wake of the global oil crisis, with oil price increases, and a renewed reliance on coal (Beynon *et al*, 1991). In addition, the election of a Labour government, and an embarrassing defeat for the Conservative party, in 1974 provided an air of optimism about the industry. The NCB even announced plans to increase the output of coal by 42 million tonnes per annum (Waddington & Parry, 1995). This optimism was short lived. The election of the Conservative Party and Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister in 1979, set alongside internationally changing markets, spelled change for the industry.

5.3.1.2 The coal industry since 1979

The election of the Conservative Government in 1979 is marked, by many, as a focal point in the transition from a Keynesian mode of social regulation to a neo-liberal mode of social regulation in the UK; and associated moves from Fordist to post-Fordist regimes of accumulation (Thornley, 1991; Ambrose, 1994; Jessop, 1995). Thatcherism spelt the end of the mining industry in the UK. During its time in opposition the Conservative Party had set out plans, in the leaked 'Ridley Report', for any possible future 'showdown' with the miners. These plans included stockpiling coal at power stations; importing coal; reducing social security entitlements for striking miners;

organising the policing of picketing, and so on (Waddington & Parry, 1995). Indeed, Colin Sweet, writing at the time of the 1984/85 strike, noted that,

> "For the present government, faced with increasing dependence on coal and a resolute trade union with a militant leadership, breaking the miners has become more than a key issue. It has become an obsession." (Sweet, 1985:201)

The Conservative agenda towards coal was largely based upon political rather than strategic energy considerations (Sweet, 1985). The coal industry was to stand on its own two feet, and be self-supporting, not reliant upon government grants or subsidies (Waddington & Parry, 1995). This reflected the central tenet of Thatcherite ideology (see Jessop, 1995) and called for greater competitiveness and efficiency within the industry.

The political actions of the Conservative Government should be set alongside processes that were occurring in the British economy, which related to broader international changes (Beynon *et al*, 1991). The 1980s saw the onset of recession and a directly correlated slump in the industrial energy demand. This, ironically, coincided with an increased supply of coal on the world market (Waddington & Parry, 1995). In 1984, for instance, there was a chronic over supply of steam coal on the world market (Beynon *et al*, 1991). The oversupply was due to several, interrelated factors. During the oil crisis of the 1970s many companies had shifted investments to coal. In addition, the supply of coal from newly industrialised countries, such as Colombia, was increasing. Productivity in the Britain was also on the rise, due to the implementation of new technology in the pits (Waddington & Parry, 1995). These factors all resulted in the over supply of coal and the need for a response from the British government and the NCB.

The NCB set about managing the growing crisis with proposals, in 1980, to 'accelerate' the closure of 23 collieries. The NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) threatened strike action and the government was forced to back down, agreeing to withdraw proposals for closure (Waddington & Parry, 1995). The problems of uneconomic production remained, and the identification of 141 pits out of 198 as unprofitable by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in 1983 signalled change to the Government's no closure agreement (Waddington & Parry, 1995). The resultant 1984/85 miner's strike ended in a bitter defeat of the miners, and the fate of the British coal industry was all but sealed.

In October 1992 British Coal announced that 31 of its 51 collieries would be closed (27 would be closed and 4 mothballed) (DTI, 1993). A few days later the Government announced a moratorium on the closure of 21 of the proposed 31 closures[ii]. This was in response to widespread public and political protestations over such a sweeping cull of the country's pits (Waddington & Parry, 1995). The review of the 21 pits was announced in the White Paper 'The Prospects for Coal' (DTI, 1993):

> "**The Government has ....concluded that there is a case for enabling British Coal to phase the inevitable closures needed and also offering the coal industry the chance of a competitive future in the private sector**. More pits will be kept open for longer in the interim. This will have the further benefit of easing the distress and dislocation which would have been caused in coalfield communities by the sudden contraction in the industry." (DTI, 1993:106;original emphasis)

The Paper set out a temporary reprieve for 12 pits, which had to prove themselves viable on the market, and the mothballing of 6 others, leaving only 23 operational collieries in the country. In addition, details of redundancy packages and regeneration measures were

also addressed, with additional funds being allocated for major new projects aimed at promoting new employment opportunities (DTI, 1993:28). The next section addresses the concept of regeneration before the specific nature of regeneration for the coalfields is explored in section 5.5.

5.4 Regeneration: the solution?

'Regeneration' has become the popular terminology associated with a set of discourses which are used to describe a certain set of strategies, policies, practices and performances aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation within areas that have experienced uneven development or industrial decline, such as the former coalfield areas (DETR, 1997). This includes tackling issues outlined in Table 5.1. Before going on to specifically discussing the regeneration practices and performances taking place in coalfields, it is useful to explore the historical, economic, spatial and political, context within which the term, and its key components, have emerged and become embedded within policy discourses.

Regeneration aims to tackle:
• long-term and youth unemployment
• low skills levels
• un-competitive industry
• poor health and education
• bad housing
• a rundown physical environment
• benefit dependency
• high proportions of lone parents
• loss of community values and social cohesion
• ethnic minority disadvantage
• high levels of crime and drug misuse

Table 5.1. The Government's Purpose of a Regeneration Programme (DETR, 1997)

5.4.1 The emergence and popularisation of regeneration within policy

Tracing an archaeology and etymology of regeneration within policy and practice is not a simple task. Unlike sustainability, literature does not exist which clearly highlights the evolution of the concept. Nor has regeneration been subject to such rigorous and extensive academic debate as the concept of sustainability. The approach taken within this section reflects this scarcity in literature and utilises two methods for tracing an etymology. Firstly, a search was conducted for references to regeneration within UK Official Publications and House of Commons parliamentary papers; and secondly, an attempt is made to trace the historical dimensions to the development of the concept.

A search for records of regeneration on the UKOP (United Kingdom Official Publications) database was conducted. This contains all official publications, those published by HMSO and others, from 1980 onwards. Figure 5.2 illustrates the results of the search. The usage of the term regeneration within official publications saw a dramatic increase in the mid-1990s. A survey of Hansard, which contains House of Commons parliamentary debates, reflected similar patterns. Whilst the term regeneration was in use from the early 1980s, it did not appear widely in official discourses until the mid 1990s.

The regulation approach, as described above, also has considerable explanatory powers here, particularly in the context of explaining the evolution of regeneration within official discourses. The emergence of 'regeneration' is framed by transitional phases in modes of accumulation, governance, and regulation. The shift from Fordism and the Keynesian welfare state to post-Fordism and a Schumpeterian workfare state, with associated 'hollowing out' of the state, provides the backdrop for evolving regeneration discourses. Cities were the initial focus of UK government policies and experiments in regeneration,

reflecting concerns with the urban capital accumulation nexus. Oatley (1998) suggests that four periods of policy transition can be observed within UK urban policy (see Figure 5.3): Physical Redevelopment 1945-1969, Area Based Social Welfare 1969-1979, Entrepreneurialism 1979-1991 and Competitive Policy from 1991 onwards (I would suggest a further transition from 1997 with the election of the Labour Party, to a period of Joined-Up Approaches).

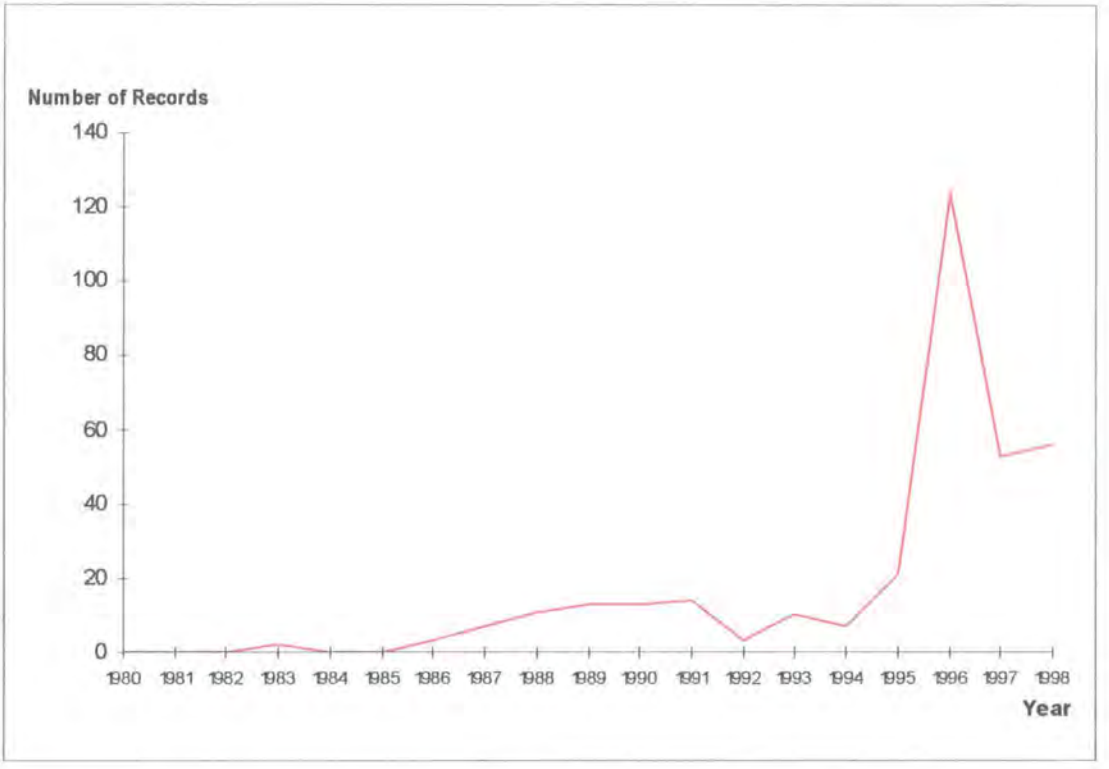

Figure 5.2 Results of word search for Regeneration on UKOP

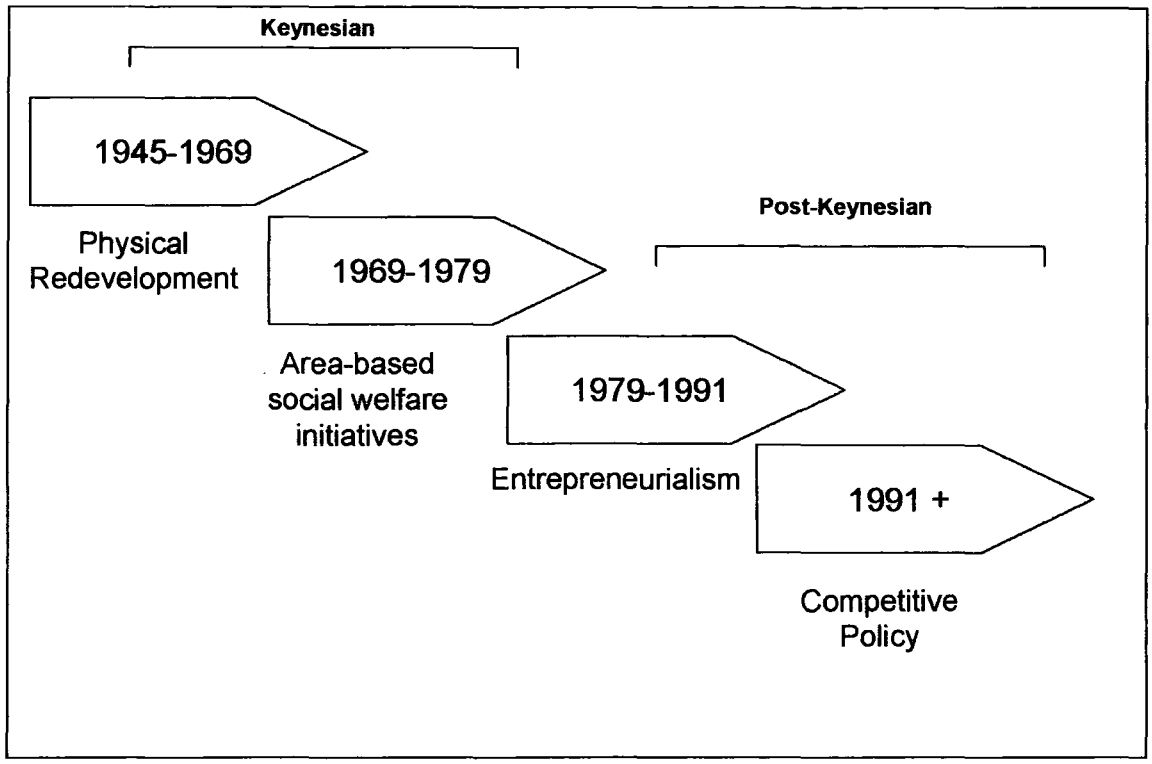

Figure 5.3 .Transitions in UK Urban Policy (based on Oatley, 1998)

From an analysis of each of these periods (see Oatley, 1998) it becomes clear that regeneration policy has evolved from the state-led, welfare based, social projects of the 1960s to market-led programmes, with economic growth stimulated by the private sector, in the early 1980s (Hill, 1994). During the 1990s there was a shift towards competitive policy culture, with the introduction of City Challenge in 1991, the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the Challenge Fund in 1994. Emphasis during this period was placed upon the allocation of funds in a competitive manner. For Oatley (1998) the distinct feature of the Challenge Fund has been the effective 'de-urbanisation' of urban policy. Localities are given an opportunity to demonstrate their needs and how they can put together partnerships to tackle them. As such regeneration discourses have been opened up to many different localities, including coalfield areas.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the newly emergent Social Exclusion Unit influenced policy and practices of regeneration. The Unit was established by the 'New Labour' Government in 1997 in order to reduce 'social exclusion'. There was a recognition that previous approaches had failed to set "in motion the virtuous circle of regeneration" and there was a need for 'joined up problems to be addressed in a joined up way' (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998:9).

5.4.2 The Main Components of Regeneration

This section performs a deconstruction of 'regeneration' in order to understand its rubric, the parameters within which it operates, by breaking it down to its constituent parts and commenting upon how these have ideologically shifted over time. This process illustrates the discursive basis upon which many claims to 'regenerate' are drawn. The main components addressed here are physical, economic, community and sustainable regeneration. These parts are not, however, mutually exclusive. A combination of all, or several of, the following components would in theory form the bedrock of any sound construction of regeneration (Nevin & Shiner, 1995).

5.4.2.1 Physical Regeneration

Efforts towards physical regeneration have a long history within the UK. The period after WWII, for instance, saw a massive programme of housing renewal, including slum clearance, public sector housing, and planned redevelopment (Hill, 1994). The dominant ideology behind this programme was of state-led welfare initiatives to address the unevenness and consequences of market forces (Barnekov *et al*, 1989). Physical regeneration can provide tangible proof of 'action'. Projects can be highly visible, such as new buildings, new roads or reclaimed land, with quantifiable outcomes that can be

subjected to hard indicators of output (Berry *et al*, 1993; Parry, 1996). Such projects can also be highly attractive to private investors, and it was on this basis that the Thatcher administration introduced the notion of 'regeneration', *per se*, to the UK during the 1980s.

Physical regeneration during the 1980s was focused upon a top-down property-led approach (Barnekov *et al*, 1989), This was mainly concerned with overcoming the supply-side constraints in local economies, particularly by simplifying the planning system, speeding up the processes of land acquisition and preparation, and using 'leverage' planning to bring back previously 'unmarketable' sites into the land market (Healey, 1991; Imrie & Thomas 1993a). Barnekov *et al* (1989) suggest that the term, regeneration, was an American import and referred to the cultural tradition of privatism in the US, within which the private sector are seen as the main agent of urban change. Public funds are used to lever private investment (the aim being a 70:30 capital to revenue ratio). The Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), as an institutional mechanism to promote regeneration typified the overall ideology of the successive Conservative Government's of the 1980s. Their large scale 'flagship' projects in inner city areas were based upon a strong belief in the market providing 'trickle down' benefits to the local community (Oc & Tiesdell, 1991). The UDCs were given considerable powers, in land acquisition and planning control, to achieve their objectives, and were able to circumvent local government (Imrie & Thomas, 1993b). Hill (1994) suggests there were some successes in terms of halting physical decline and refurbishing the infrastructure. However, there were criticisms of the ad hoc and piecemeal nature of programmes, along with doubts about their efficiency; their successes in job creation; their inability to address social polarisation and exclusion; and indeed the exacerbation of

some social problems. In addition to which environmental problems also resulted from the by-passing of the planning system (Thornley, 1991).

Physical regeneration projects remain popular as components within overall regeneration strategies. They can range from large scale 'flagship' projects to small scale environmental improvement schemes. The work of the Groundwork Trusts, for instance, is particularly important in the latter. Since the mid-1980s, Groundwork have been significant in helping local people to develop projects aimed at environmental improvement, and have recently broadened their remit to encompass the neighbourhood renewal agenda (Fordham & Lawless, 2002).

5.4.2.2 Economic Regeneration

The need for new jobs to replace old jobs is a central tenet to all regeneration policies (Hart & Johnston, 2000). The unemployment rate of an area is the most commonly used indicator of economic well being (Parry, 1996). Providing jobs through the process of inward investment has become an important aspect of regeneration initiatives (Bennett *et al*, 2000). This reflects the shift from welfare to workfare (Peck, 1998) and patterns of market deregulation, alongside increased entrepreneurialism and competitiveness (Oatley, 1998). The Enterprise Zone (EZs) initiative, for instance, was introduced during the 1980s to stimulate economic growth in areas designated economically depressed by relaxing land-use planning controls and providing tax relief for a period of ten years (Blackman, 1995).

Past emphasis was placed mainly upon supply side measures (Berry, *et al*, 1993). Public/ private partnerships were designed to support private sector inward investors' needs for land, infrastructure, training and so on. The aim was to attract foreign companies wishing

to position themselves within the Single European Market[iii]. Regions are increasingly required to bid for public money, mainly from EU sources. Bidding competitions mean that regions need to 'market' or 'sell' themselves in order to compete for scarce resources (Bennett *et al*, 2000) in what some describe as 'beauty contests' (Oatley, 1998). As a result, job 'creation' in one region has often occurred at the expense of job loss in another (Townroe & Martin, 1992). In addition, rivalries between regions and agencies working to attract public money have deepened (Parry, 1996).

Economic development was a prime aim of regeneration policy in the early 1990s (Oatley, 1998). Integrated approaches were adopted with regards to economic and social development. There was, however, a distinct bias towards economic development, defined in terms of the competitive success of localities. Local government was encouraged to be more business-like and move from a welfare to an enterprise state (Cochrane, 1993; Jessop, 1995). The first round of SRB typified this ideological shift, with the majority of initiatives being aimed at sustaining economic growth and wealth by improving the competitiveness of the local economy (Mawson *et al*, 1995). Projects were largely centred upon enhancing employment prospects, education and skills of local people.

The New Labour Government has developed a distinctive approach to regeneration, with a greater emphasis on addressing social problems in conjunction with economic development (see DETR, 1997). There is still, however, a focus upon regional strategies that sharpen economic competitiveness as evidenced in the policy directives of the new Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) (see Robson *et al*, 2000). For New Labour, the economy must be working if regeneration is to be possible. The establishment of the

RDAs, with their focus upon sustainable economic development typifies this policy emphasis (Bennett *et al*, 2000).

New Labour has also witnessed an ideological shift to 'joined-up' working practices and strategies, with devolution to local partnerships, for 'joined-up solutions' (Foley & Martin, 2000). The Employment Action Zones, for instance,

> "bring welfare, training and Employment Service funds together into flexible job accounts." (SEU,2000:34)

Regeneration programmes are increasingly encouraged to take account of existing and planned special initiatives, such as the EZs, EU funding, Lottery funding and so on (DETR,1997). SRB, for instance, is a flexible regeneration programme, which can support schemes that have a mix of objectives, such as those that aim to,

- enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people;
- address social exclusion and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged;
- promote sustainable regeneration, improving and protecting the environment and infrastructure, including housing;
- support and promote growth in local economies and businesses;
- tackle crime and drug abuse and improve community safety. (DETR, 1998h)

This new ideological 'joined-up' approach is also reflected in the growing emphasis upon community involvement in regeneration (Davies, J. S., 2002).

5.4.2.3 Communities & Regeneration

A move towards a more 'social' approach to regeneration evolved during the late 1980s. An increasing number of community-based / bottom-up approaches to regeneration emerged out of a perceived dissatisfaction with the top-down approaches of the 1980s

(Smith & Schlesinger, 1993). Within these policies and programmes we see a shift in regeneration discourse to include terms such as social capital, empowerment, capacity building, participation and even notions of 'sustainability' (Tiesdell & Allmendinger, 2000; Colenutt, 1993; Nevin & Shiner, 1995; Robinson & Shaw, 1991). Such bottom-up approaches typically involve local authorities (as the enabler) in partnerships with local communities, the private sector, quangos and the voluntary sector (Amin *et al*, 1998).

The New Labour Government's 'National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal' (SEU, 2000) emphasises a central role for local communities in the process of regeneration. Prime Minister Tony Blair claims, that,

> "unless the community is fully engaged in shaping and delivering regeneration, even the best plans on paper will fail to deliver in practice" (SEU, 2000:5)

The Government suggests that it is necessary to build the confidence of communities and encourage residents to 'help themselves' (SEU, 2000). Policies reflect attempts to tackle some forms of social exclusion by 'empowering' certain communities, groups or individuals to have a more 'inclusive' role in society (Duncan & Thomas, 2000). For instance, SRB round 5 included an annex that outlined how policy makers might involve the community (see Appendix 9 for details). These policies are underpinned by the new 'joined-up' approach, which recognises that the problems of deprived areas are 'joined-up' and as such many organisations will have a role to play in addressing them (SEU, 2000). Initiatives such as the Education Action Zones (EAZs), Employment Zones (EmpZs) and Health Action Zones (HAZs), with their devolution ideology encouraging local partnerships, are increasingly playing a significant part in area regeneration (Bennett *et al*, 2000).

5.4.2.4 Sustainability & Regeneration

There has been a growing recognition that achievement of short-term outputs may not necessarily lead to the achievement of longer-term (sustainable) objectives (Bennett & Patel, 1995). The failures of decades of regeneration initiatives to make any lasting impacts upon the problems of poverty, deprivation and social exclusion have led calls for 'sustainable' approaches to be adopted (Carley, 2000). The vast majority of regeneration projects are now required to claim that they will be 'self-sustaining' by the time they end. Bennett *et al* (2000) suggest this is akin to the pursuit of the Holy Grail because achieving self-sustainability is an impossible dream. Particularly for some community based initiatives, that require significant funding for community development (Duncan & Thomas, 2000)

The increased visibility of 'sustainability' within regeneration policy and guidance can be seen in publications such as the DoE's 'Impact of Environmental Improvements in Urban Regeneration' (1995) and the DETR's 'Sustainable Regeneration: Good Practice Guide' (1998i). In addition to which 'Opportunities for Change' also notes the contribution regeneration projects can make to,

> "sustainable communities by supporting local people and businesses in the drive to tackle social exclusion and realise opportunities." (DETR, 1998e:4)

The Paper reinforces the notions of capacity building, partnership and the centrality of sustainability principles to urban and rural communities. The Government recognises the importance of sustainability for strategic planning (as noted in Chapter 4) and as such the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were issued with draft guidance about how sustainable development should inform the actions and decisions they take in pursuit of their economic objectives,

> "taken together, the RDA's purposes require it to adopt an integrated approach to regional economic issues; bringing together economic, social and environmental objectives." (DETR, 1998c:2)

At the local level the SRB, for instance, is viewed as an important vehicle for enhancing the integrated approach of sustainable development principles. Bidding guidance notes for the SRB Round 5 asked applicants whether their proposals have considered the opportunities to reclaim and reuse brownfield sites; locate new developments where they are readily accessible by public transport, cycling or on foot; reuse existing buildings and recycle building materials; promote community-based initiatives which enable local people to participate in environmental improvement; and so on (DETR, 1998h: Annex B). Such guidance, then, reflects attempts to integrate notions of sustainability into regeneration policy for local areas and typifies the New Labour 'joined-up' approach to area and issue based regeneration initiatives.

5.5 Regeneration Initiatives and the Coalfields

Regeneration policy in coalfield communities largely mirrored urban regeneration policy during the first half of the 1990s. This is reflected in a focus upon economic-led solutions, the concentration on supply side measures and in the large number of public-private partnerships (Berry *et al*, 1993). It is also reflects the fact that there had been no specific policy or strategy for the coalfield areas since Special Development Areas legislation of 1967 (Hudson, 1989) and that the industry collapsed in an era of entrepreneurialism. There was a distinct lack of government macro-economic policy and planning policy to deal with the problems at the local level,

> "An interventionist regime would have taken the imminent collapse of the coal mining industry very differently." (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997:22)

In Sweden, for instance, the government took a different approach to the demise of its ship building industry by staggering closure over several years; maintaining unemployment pay at a high level; providing free training and skills development; offering subsidies (interest free loans) to new firms coming to the area, and so on (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997). The following section explores the development of initiatives, through political economic pressures, aimed at coalfield areas from the 1980s onwards.

5.5.1 Focusing Attention on the Coalfields: Regeneration from the 1980s onwards

The demise of the coal industry was accelerated in the 1980s by the Thatcher administration and global capitalist market mechanisms; it had, however, been declining for many years (see Figure 5.1). Policies to tackle the decline were slow in emerging, indeed it is suggested that,

> "in spite of the repeated warnings of councillors, and trade unions, the pit closure programme of the late nineteen eighties was driven through without pity, and without any trace of effective measures to mitigate its dreadful consequences." (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997:28)

The initial regeneration response from central Government reflected an emphasis upon de-regulation and market ideologies. The main agent for tackling the 'economic' regeneration of the coalfields, during this period, was British Coal Enterprise (BCE) (Parry, 1996). BCE was establishing in 1984, during the 1984/85 miners' strike, to help create 'new' jobs for 'old'; redeploy miners; and stimulate economic regeneration in the coalfields (Pickering, 1995; Beynon *et al*, 1991). The main fields of activity for BCE included: business funding; support for enterprise agencies; managed workspace and small business development; outplacement services; and new initiatives (Pickering,

1995). The emphasis was upon enterprise, by supporting businesses in public/private partnership schemes, and entrepreneurialism, through the encouragement of ex-miners to start their own businesses (Beynon *et al*, 1991; Critcher *et al*, 1995). By 1996 BCE claimed to have helped nearly 131,000 people into new jobs (Coates & Barratt-Brown, 1997). This figure suggests that two-thirds of all the jobs lost in mining over a ten year period had been replaced (Turner & Gregory, 1995). Such claims, however, have been countered by empirical research in coal mining areas, such as Critcher *et al*'s (1995) study of Thurcroft, South Yorkshire, that demonstrate that the *actual* experience of redundant miners was quite different (Turner, 1993). Many did not find work and there was little enthusiasm for setting up small businesses (Parry, 1996; Rees & Thomas, 1989). Indeed 'real' unemployment levels remained high in the coalfields (Beattie *et al*, 1997).

Central Government continued to remain distant from action in the coalfields, reliant upon entrepreneurialism and the support of European funds for driving regeneration activity. Local governments, and other agencies, operating in the coalfields became increasingly frustrated with this situation. In 1985 the Coalfield Community Campaign (CCC) was formed[iv]. The work of CCC was fundamental in focusing the attention of the EU, and eventually central government, on the plight of the coalfield areas. In conjunction with other organisations the CCC was responsible for the establishment of the EU's RECHAR programme, which ran over two phases, 1990-93 and 1994-97, with some extensions to 1999. RECHAR provided a special programme of assistance for the regeneration of the coalfields, drawing funds from the EU into the UK (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997). The programme's priorities moved from measures such as industrial unit

provision to the broader concept of Community Economic Development, which was aimed at encouraging local communities to engage in regeneration.

The CCC was also an important element of the establishment and working partnership of English Partnerships (the national regeneration Agency for England) in 1993 (CCC, 1995). The agency aims to encourage regeneration through the reclamation, development and redevelopment of land and buildings; particularly focusing upon the 56 former colliery sites that they acquired in 1996 (Howe, 1998; DETR, 1998k). In 1997 English Partnerships played an active role when John Prescott (Deputy Prime Minister) announced the establishment of a Task Force to focus upon the coalfield communities.

The Task Force represents a unique intervention in the politics of industrial decline and regeneration. No other areas associated with industrial decline in the UK have received such attention and focused support (Bennett *et al*, 2000). The aim of the Task Force was to,

> "set a framework which will empower coalfield communities affected by pit closures and job losses to create their own sustainable new start." (The Coalfields Task Force, 1998:5)

Members of the Task Force visited coalfield areas across England to listen to the concerns of local people and the agencies working within them. The result was the publication of the Coalfields Task Force Report '*Making the Difference- a new start for England's coalfield community*' in 1998. The report outlines a package of recommendations that the Task Force believes will "make a real difference to the coalfield communities" (Coalfield Task Force, 1998:5). The recommendations vary in typology, scope, timescales and the bodies to which they are addressed. However they are,

> "geared primarily towards reducing unemployment, improving the quality of life and standard of living of people in coalfield areas and empowering communities." (Coalfield Task Force, 1998:55)

In response to the Task Force report the Government announced a 'Framework for Action',

> "setting in place a clear framework for delivering a long-term (10 year plus) programme of action to regenerate the coalfield communities." (DETR, 1998k:5)

The Government pledged to invest £354 million, additional to the funds already allocated to authorities in coalfields, between 1999 and 2002 (see Table 5.2 for details) and establish the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) and the Coalfield Enterprise Fund (CET). These funding sources, and others available to coalfields, are outlined in the next section.

	1999-2000	**2000-2001**	**2001-2002**
English Partnerships Coalfields Programme	64	69	63
Coalfields Regeneration Trust	30	10	5
Coalfield Enterprise Fund	5	5	5
Coalfields Housing	8	10	10
SRB partnerships	10	20	40
Total	**117**	**114**	**123**

Table 5.2. Government Investment in the Coalfields (£m) (1999-2002)
(Source: DETR, 1998k:7)

5.5.2 Funding Regimes & Coalfield Regeneration

The funding made available to coalfield areas comes from a variety of sources, and as such is managed in differing ways. The complexity of previous regimes of funding has been something the new Labour Government has attempted to tackle with its 'joined-up' approach. Funding regimes are continuously changing. The following identifies the

funding available to coalfield communities during the time frame of the period of evidence collection for this thesis, 1999-2000. Comments are also made upon the possible directions of future funding regimes and the associated implications of these changes for coalfield areas.

5.5.2.1 European Union Funding Sources

The largest source of funding available to the coalfields has come from the EU. At around £200 million per annum, with additional match funding from other sources, it has been a significant provider (CCC, 1995; Coalfields Task Force, 1998). The RECHAR programme ended in 1999, however, and coalfields now rely upon Structural Funds. European Structural Funds represent the aid provided to lesser-developed regions and sectors of the economy from the EU (Lamb, 1997). Whilst there are four Structural Funds the two most commonly available to coalfield areas are;

> **The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**- provides assistance in particular for investment which would create or maintain jobs; infrastructure projects.....; education and training in development of local businesses; research and development; investment in environmental projects.
>
> **The European Social Fund (ESF)**- helps the long term unemployed; young job-seekers; people excluded from the labour market; promotes equal opportunities; adaptation to changes in industry; jobs, stability and growth; people's capabilities in the scientific fields; the education and training systems. (Source: Lamb, 1997:2)

Since 1995 the European Commission has determined priority for funding via a system of seven objectives:

Objective 1: helps to redevelop regions seriously lagging behind the EU average
Objective 2: helps to convert regions or areas seriously affected by industrial decline
Objective 3: helps to improve the situation of the long-term unemployed, the young and those deemed to be socially 'excluded'
Objective 4: helps working people adjust to changes in industry and production systems
Objective 5a: helps the agricultural and fisheries sectors modernise
Objective 5b: helps to redevelop rural areas
Objective 6: helps areas with an extremely low population density
(Source: Lamb, 1997:2)

The coalfields areas of the UK have tended not to qualify for Objective 1 but have under Objectives 2, 3 and 4. The European Commission has advocated three basic principles: *partnership*, of all who can contribute; *subsidiarity*, delegation of decision-making; and *additionality*, all EU funds should be additional to national funds (Coates & Barratt Brown, 1997). These principles, however, have not always been achieved and have sometimes compounded the issues that the EU is trying to address. In some poorer authorities, for instance, it is difficult to raise match funding and therefore apply for funding.

The future role of EU funding in coalfield areas remains somewhat uncertain (Coalfield Task Force, 1998). The spending round for 2000-06 has been affected by the prospect of new and even more deprived regions entering the EU from the East. The decline of the coal industry in Poland, for instance, will prove a particular challenge upon European resources already aimed at coalfield areas. Indeed, the Treaty of Paris (1951) that established the European Coal and Steel Community[v] (ECSC), expires in July 2002. Given the possibilities of less funding being available from the EU, and further structural changes in the industry, UK (former) coalfields will become increasingly reliant upon national funding regimes.

5.5.2.2 Central Government Funding & the Coalfields

The recently formed Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have taken on the administration of the SRB; the regional responsibilities of English Partnerships; and the regeneration programmes of the Rural Development Commission (DETR, 1998k). This reflects the new Labour 'joined-up' policy regime. The RDAs are also the main way of channelling EU funds into the UK. RDAs aim to;

> "promote sustainable economic development and social and physical regeneration and to co-ordinate the work of regional and local partners in areas such as training, investment, regeneration and business support." (One NorthEast, 1999:124)

They place a growing emphasis upon strategy and 'working together' at the sub-regional level. SRB5, for instance, encouraged the collaboration between adjacent local authorities with similar problems; this resulted in joint SRB5 bid submissions from a number of local authorities (see Chapter 6 for details of the SRB5 bid in Durham and Darlington). Such joint submissions will continue to grow with the new round 6 of the SRB.

The RDAs continue to focus upon physical regeneration and infrastructure for SMEs. The Coalfield Enterprise Fund (CEF) supports small firms with high growth potential (DETR, 1998k). There are also some community based projects, with funding available through the Community Investment Fund (CIF). This fund has been designed to enable local communities to participate in local regeneration; it allows community organisations (non-profit making) to apply for capital funding to accomplish land and property regeneration.

The Government also employs a number of area-based regeneration initiatives that are applicable to coalfield areas. These include the schemes that have developed as a result of the research conducted by the Social Exclusion Unit. A number of 'zones' have been established to target resources, each with their own set of distinct targets and goals. There are EAZs, HAZs, EmpZs, the New Deal for Communities, New Start, and Sure Start. In addition, the Government is investing in 'thematic' issues, such as housing through its Housing Investment Programme. There are a myriad of 'joined-up' initiatives available to the coalfields.

5.5.2.3 Other Funding Sources for Regeneration Initiatives

In addition to the public funds available to the coalfields, there are also two significant charitable sources of funding for regeneration: The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) and The National Lottery. The CRT was established within the Government's response to the Coalfield Taskforce (DETR, 1998k; Coalfield Taskforce, 1998):

> "The Coalfields Regeneration Trust is an independent grant making body....dedicated exclusively to the regeneration of our coalfield communities.
> The Trust has supported initiatives which help to restore healthy and prosperous communities such as Credit Unions, schemes to support training and jobs including intermediate labour market schemes, community and resource centres and projects which tackle health issues and financial exclusion." (CRT website[vi], 2002)

The National Lottery Development fund was established in 1994, with a remit to channel 28% of the proceeds from the National Lottery[vii] to the designated 'good causes'[viii] (Gore *et al*, 2000). The Coalfields Task Force report (1998) noted, however, that coalfields tended to fall below national and regional averages in their take up of Lottery funds. The Government's Response document established a need for research into this

issue (DETR, 1998k). The resultant research highlighted that there are a complex and variable set of circumstances and relationships operating in the coalfields that have produced difference patterns and levels of activity, with regards to Lottery funding (Gore *et al*, 2000). Not least of which is the issue that coalfields have many variable contexts (population & area; governmental structure; availability of resources; and internal geography) and that the Lottery funding regime has been subject to continuing changes (Gore *et al*, 2000).

5.5 Discourses of Regeneration

Regeneration, then, is as multi-faceted and complex as the concept of sustainability. Furbey (1999:419) provides reflections upon regeneration as a powerful 'metaphor', which, he suggests, offers an elastic canopy with "shelter for highly varied social and political values". There are numerous, often competing, interpretations, ideologies and narratives of regeneration, which are drawn upon within policy and practice, as Hill highlights;

> "From one perspective, regeneration is the pragmatic application of land-use planning, deregulation and financial incentives, to revive the urban economy. From an alternative viewpoint the term is a euphemism for the process which has been occurring in the economy as a result of the restructuring of international capitalism." (Hill, 1994:165)

Indeed, the frames for any period of regeneration would seem to reflect the dominant ideological economic and political stances in operation. Regeneration policies, and their associated funding regimes, are derived within the frames of supra-national and national contexts. The funding regimes of regeneration tend to ensure the hegemony of the state ideological regeneration thrust, simply because localities are forced to apply for funds on the 'terms' of the funding regimes available to them. This can lead to the marginalisation

of 'alternative' regeneration initiatives, such as some community-based projects for which sources of funding do not exist (Hudson, 1995). In this context the hegemonic interpretations of regeneration tend to win out. This would leave one to wonder who the regeneration is for?

It is important to consider the question: *Why regeneration as opposed to another term?* Regeneration, the word, comes from the verb to regenerate; where regenerate is identified as meaning "brought again into existence"; "reborn"; "spiritually reborn"; "restored to a better state or condition"; "reformed"; and has a biological meaning whereby tissue is formed or modified by regeneration. The interesting aspects of these definitions for the 'performativity' (Butler, 1993) of regeneration are the notions of 'reconstruction in an improved form'; the religious notions of rebirth; and the biological sense of regeneration. These all have clear links to discourses of nature and sustainability. Their circulation and performance within the East Durham coalfield regeneration practices forms the substantive basis for the remainder of this thesis.

5.6 Summary

> "**Regeneration of former Coalfields areas is working**
> Government Policies to reverse the decline of England's former coalfield areas are starting to take effect...some have enjoyed increases in employment and are integrating well into their regional economy." (DETR, 2000c: News Release 603- original emphasis)

This was a strong statement from Central Government in 2000. The decline has not only been halted but also reversed, through increased employment and regional economic integration. Yet the 'truth' of this statement surely lies in evidence gathered from empirical work, such as this thesis and Bennett *et al* (2000), which is somewhat less

optimistic. Indeed, coalfields have experienced a set of extreme circumstances, as outlined above, and have been subjected to, often, piecemeal remedial actions. The notion of regeneration is frequently played out in very different ways to the rubric and rhetoric examined within this chapter. Thus, a focus upon the social construction of regeneration policies, practices, projects and performances, at a local context, will be highly revealing.

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[i] Given that under nationalism 90% of Britain's fuel needs were being met by coal.
[ii] The remaining 10 were placed under the statutory consultation process for closure, which was under taken by the Boyd Company (1993).
[iii] The location of Nissan at Sunderland is a prime example of this (Hudson, 1995).
[iv] The CCC represents over 80 local authorities and has the twin aims of helping to project jobs in the coal industry and promoting the renewal of mining areas (CCC, 1995).
v The treaty was based on the former French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman's 1950 declaration that coal and steel resources should be pooled to avoid European countries waging war on one another.
[vi] http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/
[vii] Now the 'Lotto'.
[viii] Good causes such as arts, charities, heritage, millennium projects and sport.

6.1 A Case Study of East Durham

The previous chapter analysed the frames within which industrial restructuring, and policy responses to it, have occurred within the UK. It increasingly became recognised that the fate of local economies was heavily dependent upon their links to international market forces and national government policies, nowhere more dramatically than within the UK coalfields (Beynon *et al*, 1991). These areas now face substantial industrial restructuring as coal mining no longer exists in most of them. Their reliance upon a single industry has compounded the problem. They have experienced extreme economic decline, leading to high levels of unemployment and poor physical environment and social problems such as high levels of ill health (Turner 1995, Parry 1996, CCC 1995). Recent research has highlighted the unique nature and characteristics of the coalfield problem (The Coalfields Taskforce, 1998). In some senses they are rural, with associated issues of isolation and so on, but in many other ways they exhibit typically urban issues, such as poor housing quality akin to inner-city estates (Bennett *et al*, 2000).

This chapter provides a contextual background to the case study area of East Durham, a former coalfield in the North East of the UK. It highlights the uniqueness and commonality to the wider situational issues of decline within coalfields. In addition, background to the case study's associated embedded units of analysis is offered. This contextual background is provided through the traditional means of quantitative description, such as figures and statistics; drawn from official and local sources. In contrast, a richer in-depth interpretation is also given through use of a 'written ethnography' of the research processes and the area under study.

6.2 East Durham and the Legacy of Coal

This is the story of the coal mining area of East Durham. The narrative has its beginnings in a largely un-populated rural setting, with an acensionist plot line of growth and expansion of the coal industry, that fuelled the industrial revolution, founding numerous settlements and framing a way of life for the inhabitants of these coal settlements. Then the declenist plot line takes over with the fall of the industry at the wider level, as described in the previous chapter, having severe impacts upon these settlements and their surrounding environs. The story of the coalfields is often told as a tragedy, in cultural, social, economic, and physical terms. The aim here is to unpack the key themes and participants in the story of East Durham[i].

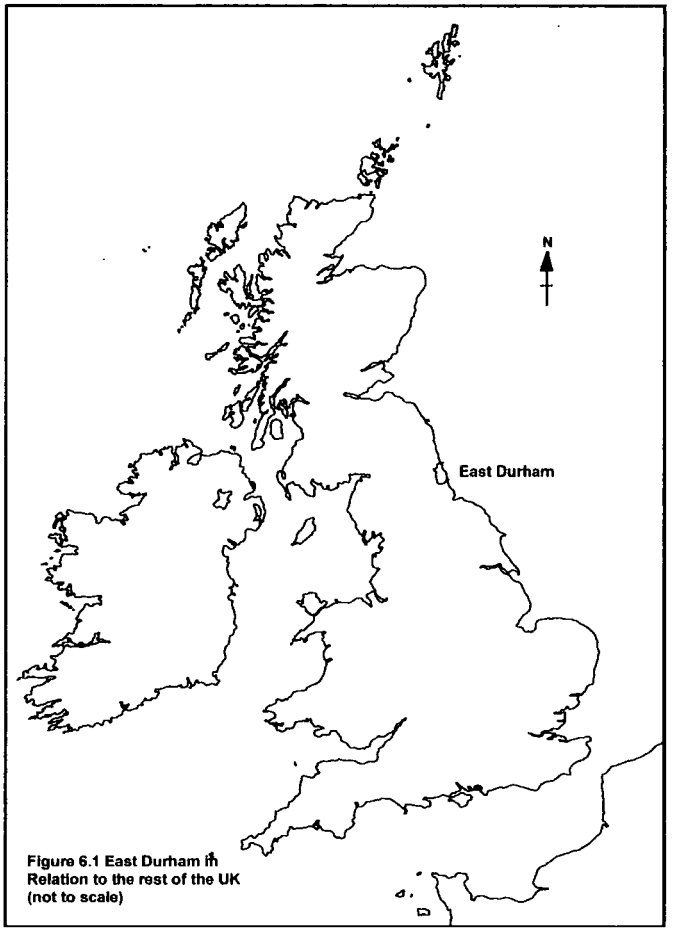

Figure 6.1 East Durham in Relation to the rest of the UK (not to scale)

Easington District lies on the north east coast of England (Figure 6.1). It is the second smallest district in County Durham (at 56 miles^2) but has the highest population in the county: 97,800 in 1991 (District of Easington, 1998a). The district contains a mixture of rural and urban areas; including the two main towns of Seaham and Peterlee; and a number of former colliery and rural villages. It has been identified as the fourth most deprived district in the UK (DETR, 2000a). The area is experiencing a wide set of deep rooted social, cultural and economic problems (see Table 6.1 for indicative deprivation indices), accompanied by a declining physical fabric, such as poorly maintained properties and environs. In addition, the decline of the coal industry has left a number of physical 'scars' on the land, such as many coal spoil sites (some contaminated), blackened beaches, derelict sites and structures.

6.2.1 King Coal: a legacy of exploitation?

> "The coal created a new breed of man, a new kind of community and a new culture. Coal created a huge industry that was to force the pace of engineering innovation and change the world." (Temple, 2001:2)

Coal mining has had a long and dominant history in East Durham. The exploitation of coal reserves commenced in the nineteenth century and continued, at a pace, during the twentieth century, fuelling the industrialisation of the country (Beynon *et al*, 1991). Coal provided employment for the vast majority of the male population. In 1929 almost 89% of the total insured population of East Durham were employed in mining (Moyes, 1962). Settlements grew, out of the need to service the mines, where once there had been agriculture and rural environments. Workers migrated to the area from the rest of the UK and Ireland. The area was built upon the coal mining industry, and

as such, its decline had devastating effects for the area (District of Easington, 1999c). The rise and fall of the coal mining industry is well documented elsewhere (Beynon *et al*, 1991) and commented upon at length in the previous chapter. The aim of this section is to provide a context to the decline of the coal industry, with its associated problems, in the area of East Durham- Easington District.

Ward	Rank of Index of Multiple Deprivation	Rank of Income Domain	Rank of Employment Domain	Rank of Health Domain	Rank of Education Domain	Rank of Housing Domain	Rank of Access Domain	Rank of Child Poverty Index
Acre Rigg	213	359	181	20	672	2179	5472	474
Blackhalls	391	1000	201	26	1936	1880	4037	1536
Dawdon	162	311	106	118	535	1238	5739	575
Deaf Hill	730	1381	510	85	2594	1787	5521	1996
Dene House	310	642	153	28	1366	2151	6541	1171
Deneside	53	195	7	7	606	1211	6110	533
Easington Colliery	176	690	92	13	192	3971	4228	1209
Easington Village	1275	2445	1107	249	2135	4792	2286	3099
Eden Hill	21	62	16	4	314	1310	5733	147
Haswell	229	1019	103	12	325	3942	2477	1605
High Colliery	318	522	164	101	1929	2193	3291	606
Horden North	255	440	47	6	3550	1925	5552	660
Horden South	281	545	61	8	3946	1062	7562	901
Howletch	411	676	239	38	2525	2340	4251	1290
Hutton Henry	438	1024	302	50	1560	2820	2161	1779
Murton East	1505	1696	1083	599	3372	3445	5287	2196
Murton West	654	1026	401	136	2879	3285	3130	1082
Park	1540	1437	1235	416	3934	4709	6699	2240
Passfield	1144	2081	753	206	2469	4682	3710	2771
Seaham	1434	2695	1103	267	1944	5053	4748	4196
Shotton	165	658	26	2	644	1854	6773	1535
South	424	691	219	75	1143	3364	8312	910
South Hetton	709	1331	562	92	2555	2147	3382	1399
Thornley	347	711	155	37	1552	2303	6471	405
Wheatley Hill	246	705	76	10	835	2434	6895	1056
Wingate	300	880	162	18	623	4735	3625	1646

Table 6.1. Ranks of Deprivation for Wards in Easington District (in relation to all wards in England: the ward with a rank of 1 is the most deprived, and 8414 the least deprived, on this overall measure- emphasis added to wards ranked in top 100). (Source DETR, 2000a)

6.2.2 Patterns of Closure

The *pattern* of closures is of significant importance to the subsequent socio-economic contexts of the settlements involved. Settlements experienced the closures in different ways. The closures of the 1960s and 1970s all occurred in the west of the district (see

Figure 6.2 and Table 6.2). The geology in this area was such that the coal reserves were not as vast as the deep mines of the coastal east, which lay under the Magnesium Limestone escarpment (Temple, 2001). Beynon *et al* (1991) illustrate that the closures were experienced by the west and east in differing ways. At the time of the Wingate closure there was still alternative employment available for the redundant miners of that colliery. These were either in new manufacturing or other coal districts, for instance 60% of Wingate's miners transferred out of the county, many going to the coalfield areas of Yorkshire and Nottingham (Beynon *et al*, 1991). Some, however, transferred to the pits on the coast and remained as residents of Wingate. The result of this migration was that villages like Wingate, Thornley and Wheatley Hill (which also had closures in this period) felt a sharp decline of the working population. This, in turn, led to a rapid decline of facilities and services within these settlements, such as reduced numbers of shops, and poor housing conditions.

Colliery	Closed
Wingate	1962
Deaf Hill	1967
Wheatley Hill	1968
Thornley	1970
Shotton	1972
Blackhall	1981
South Hetton	1983
Horden	1986
Murton	1991
Dawdon	1991
Seaham/ Vane Tempest	1992
Easington	1993

Table 6.2 East Durham Colliery Closure Dates

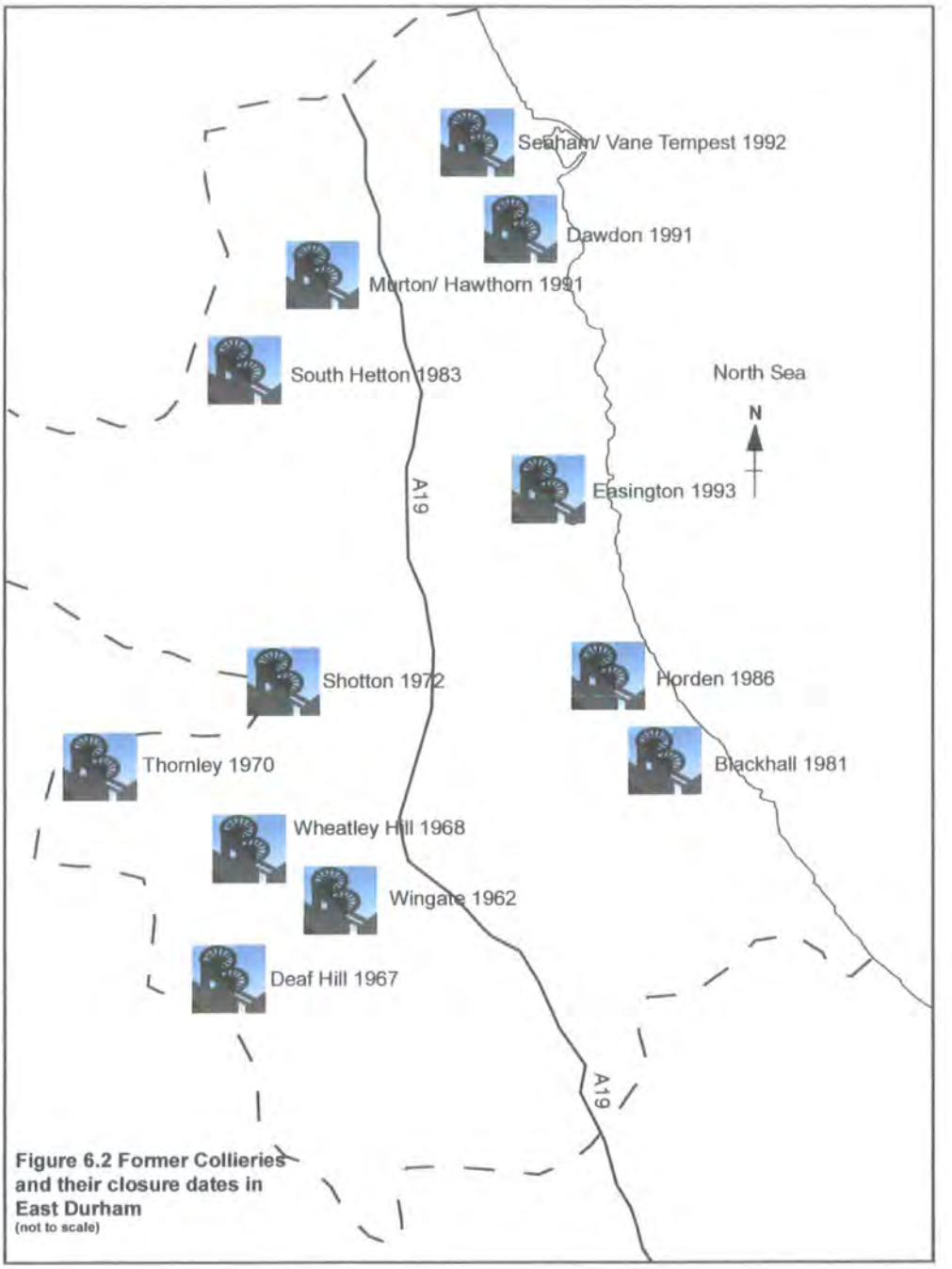

Figure 6.2 Former Collieries and their closure dates in East Durham
(not to scale)

This process of decline was exacerbated by District and County Council policies that aimed to deal with housing, settlement distribution and industrial development. During the 1950s the County Council planned for a distribution of population based upon access to industrial opportunity (Bulmer, 1978a). The aim was to create new centres for employment and housing, and to abandon the colliery settlements in west Durham.

Alongside these, the District Council implemented plans to deal with the housing problems of Easington (overcrowding and squalor in the east) by creating a new town (what is now Peterlee) (Temple, 2001). To encourage migration to the new centres, like Peterlee, the county council devised a method of resource allocation for settlements by categorising them on a scale from 'A' to 'D' (Bulmer, 1978a). 'A' settlements were those which would receive a considerable amount of investment whereas 'D' were,

> "those from which a considerable loss of population may be expected. In these cases it is felt that there should be no further investment of capital." (Durham County Council Draft Development Plan 1951, as cited in Bulmer, 1978a:182)

The essential context being that such settlements would have no future without this investment. This policy, alongside the development of Peterlee New Town, was highly controversial in East Durham (Temple, 2001). Bulmer (1978a) suggests that it reflected a sociological failing, on the part of the planners, to recognise the strength and solidarity of the coal mining communities. Whilst the policies were implemented, some category 'D' settlements, such as Wingate, resisted such change and still exist today. But the fact that they remained as populated settlements, with little to no investment, heightened the problems of the colliery closures.

The further decline of the coal mining industry throughout the 1980s and 1990s saw a complete closure of all collieries. The area, however, experienced these closures in different ways, again, to those of the 1960s and 1970s. By the time Blackhall colliery closed in 1981 the experience was significantly different to that of Wingate, as outlined above. Beynon *et al*'s research on the ex-miners of Blackhall colliery found that, out of

the 1,273 men that they traced, only 5 transferred to other coalfields, 450 took redundancy but the vast majority transferred to the remaining collieries in the district. This meant that the population did not decline, quite as drastically, as in Wingate. Also, disposable income remained relatively high due to the wages of the transferred miners and the redundancies (Beynon *et al*, 1991).

The transference of miners from Blackhall meant that the receiving collieries no longer recruited, thus job opportunities in mining ceased all across the district at this time. The subsequent closures during the 1990s of the remaining collieries saw an end to all jobs in mining in the district. The final closures of mines across the UK prompted campaigning (see Section 5.5.1). This led to funding becoming available for regeneration practices, mainly for the east of district- not necessarily the west. The following sections highlight the consequences of the closures upon the district.

6.2.3 The Resultant Employment Situation

Prior to 1951 over 80,000 people were employed within the coal mining industry. By 1993 all the pits were closed (District of Easington, 1999c). In the District of Easington the decline of the coal mining industry led to the first colliery closure in 1962 at Wingate. It is estimated that 50,000 jobs were lost during the 1960s in Durham (Beynon *et al*, 1991). The decline of the mining industry in East Durham had a significant impact upon the employment patterns of the area. In 1951 there were 25,000 miners working in the industry. By 1971 the number of collieries had decreased with a reduction of those employed in mining to 15,000. Subsequent closures of a further seven collieries left only 4,500 miners in 1991. With the closures of the last two pits, Seaham Vane Tempest and Easington, came the final losses, of 2,200 jobs. It is

estimated that a total of 75,000 jobs, direct and indirect, have been lost since 1951 (The District of Easington, 1999c).

Easington continues to suffer high levels of unemployment. In 1999 the national average for claimant unemployment was 5.0%, whilst in Easington it was 9.4% (The District of Easington, 2000). This is, however, only a partial picture of the unemployment problem. A study by Beatty *et al* (1997)[ii] found a distinct discrepancy between claimant unemployment counts and 'real unemployment'. People who are long-term unemployed may be categorised as 'economically inactive' and not appear in official figures. This was a common finding in coalfield areas, those on sickness benefits; in premature retirement; or with redundancy money, were not being counted within claimant count figures. Beatty *et al* (1997) adjusted for these distortions to produce estimates of 'real unemployment', thus revealing very high levels of hidden unemployment across England. They estimate that the real unemployment level for Easington District is 31 %, compared to an English average of 14%[iii].

An unemployment (economically inactive) level of 31% clearly has severe consequences for the district. Much of the unemployment is long-term. In some families there exists third generation unemployment. A lack of employment and future employment opportunities can lead to a whole host of socio-economic problems, such as outward migration, lower wage levels, limited local spending power, poor standards of health, low educational attainment, and limited housing choices. The parameters of some of these problems in East Durham are addressed at length in the following sections, and illustrated through the subsequent ethnographic account in section 6.3.

6.2.4 An Area in Decline?

The lack of employment opportunities, in mining and more generally, have led to a significant decline in the population of the area. The population of Easington has been falling, dramatically, since the 1960s. Since 1971 the population has decreased by 12%, from 110,000 to 96,800 in 1994 (East Durham Taskforce, 1997). It is estimated, however, that population levels will stabilise at 98,000 by the year 2006 (District of Easington, 1998a). During the period 1981- 1997 the population fell by 7.2%, compared to a UK increase of 4.7% (District of Easington, 2000). The pattern of decline has not been uniform throughout the district. Of the twenty six wards in the district, three actually experienced an increase in population, for instance the ward of Acre Rigg in Peterlee saw a population rise of 10% between 1993 and 1999, in contrast to the ward of Dawdon in Seaham which experienced a 10% decline over the same period (District of Easington, 2000). The significant factor being that Dawdon was a pit ward.

The remaining population in many of these settlements is increasingly aged. The Coalfield Taskforce (1998) highlighted how out-migration can strip communities of their most dynamic and prosperous element. The population demographics are such that there is little spending power within the district (East Durham Taskforce, 1997). Many of the regeneration initiatives within the district reflect efforts to redress this, and are,

> "targeted at young people, since they are key to the area's future." (East Durham Taskforce, 1997:3)

The need to attract a younger, skilled, population to the area is also a theme of regeneration initiatives. This is explored in chapters 8 and 9. The following sections, however, address the impacts of population decline upon the area.

6.2.5 The Physical Fabric: An Economic, Social and Cultural Heritage?

A considerable number of settlements in the district arose as a direct result of coal-mining activity built to house workers and families in the immediate vicinity of the mines. Prior to this period East Durham was characterised by rural villages and hamlets. The demand for coal to fuel the industrialisation of Britain led to an influx of miners and other workers from all over the county. The result was the rapid growth of settlements, and 'new' communities (including pit men from all over Britain; Irish immigrants, old Durham families and green labourers[iv]) around the pits (Temple, 2001). These settlements emerged with little consideration of land use planning, design or layout. Houses were built as close to the pit head as possible, sometimes dangerously so, which reinforced the dominance of coal in the lives of those who occupied them,

> "Houses were built tight around the pit-head so the clank of steel against steel, the whistle of steam, and the acrid smell of the furnaces formed the inescapable backdrop of village life." (Temple, 2001:51)

Nor were there any attempts made to blend the settlements with the surrounding countryside. This piecemeal approach to development has heightened some of the physical and locational (isolation) problems the area faces today,

> "The uncompromising prominence of Durham villages in the landscape, their blunt edges, harsh contours and rows of monotonous terraces bear witness to these origins." Civic Trust (1989:5)

Today colliery housing is particularly unpopular on the housing market. The CTF (1998:26) was "shocked" by the "dreadful conditions" it saw on some estates in Easington. During the 1980s British Coal sold most of its housing stock. The houses were bought by sitting tenants (mostly miners), local authorities, housing associations, and absentee landlords (The Coalfields Taskforce, 1998). Many former miners are unable to move due to the negative equity accrued on their properties (Hollywood, 1997). Some have sunk their redundancy money into their homes, paying off mortgages or refurbishing, only to find that their homes have little resale value as other properties on the same estates fall into disrepair.

Plate 6.1. Easington Colliery Streetscape

Properties owned by absentee landlords, in the district, are often neglected and in very poor condition. In some areas these houses make up a significant proportion of an estate. Many houses are unoccupied, void, and boarded up (see Plates 6.1 & 6.2).

They are vandalised and often associated with anti-social behaviour- particularly drug taking. In some settlements, Easington Colliery for instance, a policy of demolishing entire streets has been adopted to deal with over-supply of such houses, and to create green space. Occupied properties are frequently rented to referrals from the social services, and as a result the population is increasingly transitory (The Coalfields Taskforce, 1998).

Plate 6.2 Easington Colliery Derelict Housing

The district has high levels of local authority owned dwellings, compared to the national average. In 1997 33% of dwellings were owned by the Council, compared to the national average of 25% (District of Easington, 1998a). This places increasing pressure on the public sector at a time of shrinking public finances. It is estimated that

80% of all public housing in Easington can be classified as unfit, in need of substantial renovation, vacant, or difficult to let (DETR, 2000b).

6.2.6 The Community Fabric and the Collieries

Coal played a central part in the lives of those who worked in the pits. Not only did the industry provide employment and housing but it also gave rise to a social structure for those living in the settlements. Strangleman (2001) suggests that identity with work and industry can produce and reproduce social ties and connections; and the coalfields represent classic examples of how work can come to dominate place. In an account of life in Durham mining villages Sid Chaplin notes,

> "Well, the one thing about being born into a mining community is that 'ye knaa whe ye are'. You know who you spring from, you know who you belong to, your roots are firmly embedded. In fact at times you feel imprisoned in a past that isn't entirely yours, a past that belongs to the community." (Chaplin, 1988:60)

Indeed much has been made of community spirit in coal mining areas, particularly with reference to working-class society, that included a strong trade union and political base (Allen, 1981; Bulmer, 1978b; Hall, 1981). The coal industry was undoubtedly important in the creation of a strong trade union force that was intertwined with labour policies at both the local and national level. The Durham Miners' Association, for instance, was particularly influential in the roles of the parish and county council, and had considerable power with members of parliament for the area (Beynon and Austrin, 1994). The NUM still plays an active role within the colliery villages, in terms of providing advice to former miners, often on compensation claims. It is, however, a much reduced role.

In many ways the industry formed a 'way of life' for those who worked and lived in the coal mining settlements. Not only in terms of political power but also culturally, especially in leisure activities. In his book *"Coming Back Brockens"* Mark Hudson describes spending a year in Horden. He finds a sense of pride and distinct nostalgia for the pit and what it provided; on one occasion he is shown around Horden by an ex-miner, named John, who stops, points and notes;

> "There were two rugby pitches, a football field with grandstand, a cricket ground, two play areas with swings and roundabouts. And it had all been paid for by the miners. Sixpence a week was taken off their pay to maintain it..... To our left, behind a high wooden fence, there had once been an open-air swimming pool. 'All this was paid for by the miners,' said John proudly. And it had all been in the very shadow of the pit." (Hudson, 1995:37)

Inevitably the demise of the coal industry had significant cultural impacts upon East Durham. Most of the facilities that 'John' describes were lost, along with the extraordinary kinship ties that Chaplin (1988) suggests made a hard occupation into a tolerable way of life. The lack of cultural facilities is highlighted in the District Council's Draft Cultural Strategy, where it is noted that the provision of community facilities is patchy; there are no major cultural facilities; and perhaps most importantly people (who can) travel out of the district for days out, the arts, cinema, entertainment, and leisure sports (District of Easington, 2000). East Durham, in the wake of the final closures, lost much of the foundations of its community fabric.

6.2.7. An Un-Healthy Legacy

The coal industry provided a particularly dangerous working environment for the miners, with many suffering long term ill health or disability from accidents or

industrial diseases such as chronic bronchitis and pneumoconiosis (Bulmer, 1978b). The District of Easington has particularly low standards of health amongst its population. The DETR Index of Deprivation 2000 lists six wards, in the district, as amongst the 10 most deprived in the country (see Table 6.1). The 1991 Census illustrated that the level of long-term illness within the UK population was 12.8% and in Easington it was 22.5%.

The coal mining industry bequeathed a legacy of ill health and high levels of mortality to East Durham. This clearly impacts upon health care provision, which has been historically poor within coalfields (Temple, 2001). In addition, levels of ill health are a major factor in working. An audit of skills, conducted by the District Council in 1998, found that 30% of respondents had left work due to ill health and that 27% said that disability was an obstacle to finding work (District of Easington, 2000). Thus the population is highly reliant upon state benefits.

6.2.8 Landscapes of Power

The coal industry left a huge imprint upon the landscapes and environment of the former coal mining areas. All energy resources produce an impact upon the environment, but perhaps none are more evident than those resulting from our use of coal (Pasqualetti, forthcoming). The industry was particularly harsh upon its surrounding environment, producing distinct iconographic and symbolic landscapes of power (Pasqualetti, forthcoming). Indeed, Pasqualetti points to famous writers who have drawn upon such iconographies to frame human suffering within their work, such as D.H.Lawrence in his novel 'Sons and Lovers'. Whilst there were some, very limited, efforts to mitigate against the environmental costs of coal mining, the resultant

impacts were still felt in spatial concentrations- a form of environmental injustice (Harvey, 1996).

The coal mining industry left 'hob-nail boot marks' on the environment of East Durham (to extend the metaphor of an ecological footprint- see Chambers *et al*, 2000). The landscapes of East Durham felt the impacts of coal perhaps more than any other UK coalfield. Whilst all coalfield areas suffered a legacy of derelict and contaminated land, polluted watercourses and poor built environment (The Coalfields Taskforce, 1998); East Durham also endured considerable despoliation of its coastal zone and beaches (East Durham Taskforce, 1995). The coastal area of East Durham was used extensively for mining activities, such as the disposal of spoil, for over 150 years. The coast became a "no-go" area for the many who lived nearby, with un-surveillanced anti-social behaviour common place. When mining ceased, physical scars such as: blackened beaches and cliffs; cliff erosion; habitat loss; altered shorelines and seabeds; depleted marine life; derelict structures and disused colliery sites were all too familiar. (In)Famously used as a backdrop for the filming of scenes in 'Get Carter' and 'Aliens 3', the coast had become an unattractive, inhospitable, and largely un(der)-used environment.

The District was also left with a considerable number of derelict sites, either former colliery workings or spoil. In 1995 the East Durham Taskforce estimated that there were over 200 hectares of derelict land requiring reclamation. Many agents recognised the utility of reclamation for the purposes of regeneration and sustainability. For instance, the District and County Councils focused much of their initial regeneration work upon land reclamation for the purposes of industrial spaces, housing sites and as

nature conservation resources (see section 6.5.1). The Local Plan stresses the reclamation of land for sustainable development, arguing that using brownfield sites puts less pressure on surrounding countryside and green belt land (District of Easington, 1998a). In addition, there is recognition of the need to improve the environment in a 'visual' sense in order to attract investment, tourism and inward migration, as outlined in the East Durham Taskforce objectives towards derelict land (see Chapter 8 for further discussion).

6.3 An Ethnography of East Durham: Recurring themes and the individuality of place

One of the strongest themes to emerge during the course of the field work was that the settlements of East Durham are very different places today, compared to when the pits were open. I found people were quick to lament the lifestyle and community atmosphere they felt the pits gave rise to. On numerous occasions I heard stories of how good it was when the pit was open and that there were a lot of things to do in the villages, such as cinemas and clubs. But most importantly they were communities and there was a feeling of security. They could leave doors unlocked, and felt that youth crime was dealt with by the men who worked in the pit monitoring situations as they went to work- "the benign police force" as Mary[v] put it. She added that they had little vandalism, no drug problem and little burglary, and that children were safe playing on the street. Mary, and many others, told me that the situation is very different now and that "it's not the same here anymore". There is a distinct sense of bereavement and grief, that the community seems to suffer collectively.

Since the closure of the pits, the very composition of the community has been altered significantly. There has been marked out migration, but perhaps of more importance to those who remain are the new incoming population. Houses rented by absentee landlords are often occupied by 'bad tenants'. At a residents association meeting I heard one man talk about the problems he was experiencing because he lived next to some 'rough' people. He said that they had broken into his house on a number of occasions. He asks the meeting what he can do about it, he's clearly exasperated and considering taking matters into his own hands.

The police are all too aware of the problem. A police representative, later in the same meeting, outlined how he had arrested two suspects when he attended a house where the alarm had been triggered. Prosecution, however, was proving difficult because the house is owned by an absentee landlord, who claims he 'doesn't have time' to come and make a statement. This is indicative of the general attitude of absentee landlords. They accept DSS referrals, because payment of rent is often guaranteed. These referrals cannot get social housing elsewhere due to anti-social behaviour records. Such tenants can leave owing rent or money for repairs. The landlords do very little to maintain the upkeep of their properties as a result.

Villages like Easington, Horden and Dawdon are uninviting, hard, cold places (especially in the winter months). They have poor street lighting and the quality of the buildings and open spaces is exceptionally poor. They are generally characterised by the old terraced colliery houses and some newer build estates. There is little greenery to break up the harshness of the terraced facades. Vandalism is common place. Some streets have been demolished. Others remain with the majority of houses boarded up or

burnt out. In such streets there will be the odd house where the owner cannot sell, or does not want to, and has to live next door to empty buildings, which are often used for anti-social behaviour.

It is depressing to see these streets. Some residents have clearly put a lot of effort into caring for their homes whilst the fabric of the community has crumbled around them. Sheila told me about her sister, who could not sell her house and was offered half of its value by a group of absentee landlords. She did not accept and ended up having the house repossessed only for it to be sold to the landlords at auction. The grim reality is that these are nice houses, spacious, good family homes but people do not want to live in these streets anymore because they are becoming less and less desirable, and crime is rising. David said he was "ashamed to tell people where I live nowadays. **Ashamed I am**".

There are few facilities left in these villages and there are poor public transport services running through them. Driving through the villages you feel that they are 'closed' (not unlike the 'tumbleweed' towns characterised in cowboy movies). The few shops that remain are often shuttered (with strong metal), even during opening hours. Some, however, are showing signs of improvement. Easington, for example, is better since there has been a settlement renewal initiative in the village. A lot of work has been done on the physical environment and shop fronts of the main street. On a visit there one day I was struck by the thought that it had a bit more life about it these days and people were using the shops not just to purchase but as a social event. Whereas in Horden, for instance, the main street has few shops left open and these are more spaced out, I rarely saw people 'using' the shops in a similar manner.

The cinemas are long since closed in all the villages and some of the clubs have closed down too. There is little to occupy the youth of the villages and often they spend evenings hanging around in certain areas (a park, a street corner, a set of benches, or often an empty house) drinking or using drugs and often 'causing trouble'. They are a frightening sight and I know I am never comfortable passing a group such as this. People told me how they 'dreaded' the school holidays when the children would get bored. Bill spoke, bitterly, of the time he was 'attacked' by a group of young boys on bikes as he made his way home from the club one night- they spat at him and called him names. Whilst this had happened a couple of years ago it still haunts him and he said that he now crosses the road if he sees a gang of youths. Bill's sense of powerlessness and loss for an age in which 'this would never have happened' were very striking.

There is an overwhelming sense of powerlessness within these communities. Many people resent the closure of the pits. There are still conversations in local clubs and pubs about the demise of the industry and particularly the 1984/85 strike. Feelings on the matter still run high, with some men still holding grudges: "I don't bother with him no more, he was a scab". There are men who have never worked since leaving the pit, having to rely on state benefits (if they were eligible for them- often they were not due to their redundancy money: having savings of more than £8000 is prohibitive to claiming benefits), or be supported by their wives. They feel as if they have little impact on what happens to them. I chatted to David whilst he waited for his daughter and wife to come home from work. He said he could not talk to me for long as he had to get the tea on, then he said "I can't believe I've been reduced to this- women's work".

I spoke to many men who openly admitted to being depressed, some of them having tried to commit suicide. My home town of Seaham hit the headlines a few years ago when the vicar was quoted in the Sunday Times as saying that he had more funerals due to suicide in his first six years in Seaham than the whole of his previous twenty-five years elsewhere in Britain. Depression is common place. The number of people suffering from ill health is extremely high. I was often told of the exceptionally painful and debilitating physical problems men had once they left the industry, usually as a result of industrial accidents. They would often say that, "I was alright till I stopped working, then I seized up". Pat told me that he has given up asking after old colleagues because they had usually passed away.

There are many people merely 'existing' in Easington. They live in poverty and experience high levels of deprivation. Since redundancy they 'kill time'. They have no money to participate in formal leisure pursuits. I often see groups of men walking just to kill time; its a regular social event for them. Also there is a strong informal black economy, sometimes there are some exceptionally 'interesting' businesses running from local allotments.

These are all issues I had never really stopped to think about too closely before I commenced my field work. I knew about these things and would retell them if asked for an account of where I lived but they were not things that made me fearful of the places I frequented in my own time. I had become used to them, adopting my own (often unconscious) strategies for dealing with them. Yet when presented with them in locations just a few miles down the road I was often fearful of leaving my car (for its

safety and my own) or struck by the harshness and depressing nature of the local environment. On one occasion I asked another research student from the university to accompany me to an evening meeting in a pit village. It was held at the local Catholic Club. As we drove through the village I sensed his anticipation of leaving the safety of the car, he later told me how he feared for me going out at night in these "dark and frightening places".

Yet within these frightening places I know the heart of the community still tries to beat. I attended a number of community group meetings, with turn-outs of over twenty people, ranging in gender and age. These 'groups' are not those involved more formally in the regeneration processes of East Durham but they do undertake a considerable amount of community work. The types of events that these groups organised included such things as luncheon clubs, running play schemes, day centres for disabled people, art and craft events, or just providing spaces for people to go. I know from my research and personal experience that there is still a vast amount of community spirit in East Durham. People are prepared to 'do' things, to get involved but there is a distinct amount of fear and suspicion in doing so. Ron told me that he would like to get out of his house more, he was suffering from depression, and would like to attend a day centre but was concerned that this would affect his benefits. There is also a high level of apathy, a result of previous efforts to engage community members in processes of regeneration, only for little to actually happen: " Amanda, we're sick of people coming in and researching us. We tell them what we want. What we need. But nowt happens. **It's all a waste of money**!".

6.4 East Durham: The regeneration context

This section provides a brief context to the regeneration policies and initiatives that have been put in place, and are currently still in operation, within East Durham, to address the problems that have been outlined in this chapter. These policies stem from the late 1980s and the growing concern at local, national and supranational levels with the impacts of colliery closure (as discussed in Chapter 5). At the local level, the local governments became increasingly concerned with the ways in which inner city problems took precedence and funding regimes excluded areas like East Durham. In 1985 the local authorities of Easington, Durham and Sunderland joined together to commission an "Article 24" study for East Durham Coalfield Area[vi]. This resulted in the production of the ERDF supported report "*The Potential for Investment Projects in the East Durham Coalfield: A New Future for East Durham*" in 1988, within which the overall aim was to,

> "identify what more can be done to attract investment to, and encourage employment growth in the East Durham Coalfield." (ECOTEC, 1988:i)

The report recommended thirteen projects, which encompassed some proposals from the local authorities. The projects included environmental clean-ups; a settlement renewal strategy; infrastructure provision; promotional agencies; land and strategic premises creation; advisory and consultancy support to firms; creation of managed workshops; a tourism development strategy; agricultural diversification; port development at Seaham; and training and community education initiates (ECOTEC, 1988).

The European Commission recognised the need to offer support to the Durham coalfield by inviting local authority and central government partners to bid for the RECHAR programme (see section 5.5.2.1). The bid for RECHAR, submitted in 1990, drew upon the recommendations of the ECOTEC report (1988) to suggest an appropriate programme strategy for the area, which included two main components: the Spatial Strategy (concentrating 'action' in Easington District) and the East Durham Taskforce (a multi-agency forum to design, deliver and monitor regeneration) (RECHAR Programme Bid County Durham, 1990-1993).

Central government support came in the form of the EDTF which was established in 1990, with the co-operation of the public and private sector, alongside a number of major organisations. The main aims of the EDTF were to:

- focus attention on the problems and opportunities of East Durham
- plan and prepare in advance of further colliery closures
- consider, develop, support and promote action, including new initiatives, such as those from the European Commission
- monitor and review progress, and
- improve co-ordination and integration between agencies.

(EDTF, 1991:2)

The first EDTF report outlined twelve main elements of a 'Programme for Action' which were to guide regeneration actions within the area for the next five to ten years. These elements also reflect the recommendations of the ECOTEC report, and include: transport infrastructure; derelict land reclamation; industrial land; industrial property; coastal improvement; tourism; business support and enterprise development; action against unemployment; training and education; community development; settlement renewal; and housing (East Durham Task Force, 1991). This first report has been updated on two occasions, in 1993 the document 'Signs of Hope was prepared, after

the closure of the last mines in the area, and in 1997 'The Road to Success' outlines the progress to date and future priorities. Within this final EDTF document, a vision and series of strategic objectives are outlined; the vision is,

> "to create a sustainable future for East Durham, with new jobs to replace those lost in traditional industries, a greatly improved environment and a revived community spirit, thereby enabling the area to become a better place to live, work and visit." (East Durham Task Force, 1997:4)

The meaning and use of sustainability, here, is discussed in Chapters 8 and 9. During the period of fieldwork the Task Force was winding up its operations and new structures were forming in order to design, deliver and monitor regeneration for the area.

6.5 Contextual Background to the Units of Analysis

The case study approach to this thesis employs the use of four embedded units of analysis, alongside the more generic area wide level (see section 3.3). This section explores the 'relevance' of each unit in addressing the thesis questions. Contextual background and an outline of the evidence gathered is provided, and subsequent chapters will examine the discourses of sustainability and regeneration as they emerged within the units of analysis.

Unit of Analysis	General Level	Dalton Flatts	SRB 5 / 6	Turning The Tide	Settlement Renewal Initiatives
Evidence Gathered	**Interviews**(6): 3 Executive Directors District of Easington Executive Director, Durham Rural Community Council Project Worker, East Durham Village Consortium LA21 Officer, Durham County Council **Focus Groups**(4): Shotton Thornley x2 Trimdon **Observations**: Wingate/ Station Town/ Hutton Henry Partnership Meeting Shotton Partnership Meeting Thornley Partnership Meeting Trimdon Station RA Meeting Easington Colliery RA Meeting District Wide Community Regeneration Meeting Polish Visitors to Easington Social Exclusion Unit Consultation/ Conference District Councillor	**Interviews** (8): Consultant, Chestertons Developer, Matthew Fox Developments Consultant, GLHearn Officer a Economic Development, District of Easington Head of building control and services, District of Easington Secretary, East Durham Business Club Assistant Director and Head of Planning, Economic Development and Planning Department, Durham County Council Managing Director, Modus Properties **Focus Group** (1): DAFG **Observations**: DAFG Public Inquiry Public Meetings	**Interviews**(12): Head of Housing, District of Easington Consultant, Banks of Wear Executive Director, DCDA Officer b, Econ Devt, District of Easington Officer c, Econ Devt, District of Easington Developer, Beazer Leech Homes Developer, CTAB Officer, One NorthEast Solicitor, Jacqueline Emmerson Solicitors Project Officer DCDA Officers a+b, Groundwork Trust Officer, Durham County Council Officer, DETR(Letter) Officer, G.O.N.E (TEL) **Focus Groups** (2): PRA Dawdon Partnership **Observations**: PRA meetings- public and committee Dawdon Partnership meeting Dawdon Private Homes Steering Group meeting	**Interviews**(11): Officer, TTT Office Officer, English Nature Chair, S.E.A Environmental Service Manager, District of Easington Officer, National Trust Manager, Seaham Harbour Dock Company Officer, Countryside Agency Officer, Groundwork Trust Officer, Environment Agency Officer, Northumbria Water Officer, OneNorth East Officer, English Nature (TEL) Officer, Northern Arts (TEL) Executive Director, Groundwork Trust (TEL) **Focus Group** (1): ERA (FG) **Observations**: Parish Councillor TTT Celebration Sept 2001 Litter Pick at Horden Talk from TTT to Peterlee Walkers Group	**Interviews**(6): Officer, East Durham Taskforce Head of Regeneration, District of Easington Officer, Blackhall SRI Officer, Murton SRI Officer, Horden SRI Officer, Easington SRI Focus Groups (2): Easington Steering Group Blackhall Steering Group Observations: Horden Steering Group Meeting Blackhall Steering Group Meeting

Table 6.3. Evidence Collected during Fieldwork

6.5.1 The 'General' Level

The research process began with a concern for the 'general area' of study. It was essential to situate issues of regeneration and sustainability within the context of East Durham, as the overall area of study. Gathering evidence at this wider level allowed current issues, performances and discursive conflicts to emerge. Furthermore, this evidence was set in context to the historical and cultural development of previous initiatives. This process was a fundamental part of choosing the units of analysis, and ensuring their relevance to the thesis. Indeed, gathering data at the general level remained important once the units of analysis had been chosen.

6.5.1.1 Evidence Collected at the General Level

My specific efforts to explore the general level are illustrated in the focus groups interviews conducted with the local regeneration steering committees across the district (such as Shotton 2000 Partnership, see Tables 3.2 and 6.3 for details). I also observed a number of events and meetings, such as a district wide community regeneration meeting and a series of events organised for visitors from Poland (see Table 6.3). I used the snowballing technique to obtain interviews, taking opportunities to interview interesting (relevant) people that I met at meetings or events[vii]. I developed a complex network of research contacts that allowed me to explore a number of interwoven levels of regeneration work being conducted in the District and to identify the myriad of actors in the processes and practices of regeneration and sustainability. It should be noted that a considerable amount of evidence collected *within* the units of analysis can also be considered to be relevant at the 'general' level. For instance, an interview with an officer of the EDTF, that was originally focused on SRIs, diverged to other units of analysis and

the wider context of regeneration and sustainability within East Durham. Therefore, in some cases it was difficult to assign evidence gathered to the columns in Table 6.3.

6.5.2 Dalton Flatts

The proposed 'Dalton Flatts'[viii] development emerged as relevant to the thesis due to my 'positionality', and the reliance upon claims to regeneration and sustainability, by those involved, as justification, simultaneously, for and against the development. I live less than a mile from the site (Dalton Flatts) and had closely followed the proposed developments from the outset. In June 1998 Matthew Fox Developments Ltd submitted an application for planning permission for a mixed leisure and shopping development on the site. The application for planning permission claimed that it would involve an investment of £36 million, creating approximately 1000 permanent and 550 temporary jobs (The Napper Partnership, 1998). The proposal involved a mixed leisure and retail development, including factory outlet shops, a cinema, bowling alley, hotel, restaurants, fitness centre, crèche and petrol station/ car showroom; on a brownfield site adjacent to the village of Murton (see Figure 3.4 and Plate 6.3).

This proposal sparked a considerable amount of public interest, and featured heavily in the local media. For instance, my family, friends and I talked about the development and how we thought it would be good for the area, as we have nothing like it and usually have to travel miles for such facilities. We also talked of how nice it would be to see the site 'used'. It has been a large spoil heap for many years. We had even used the site for walking the dogs, but it was a particularly bleak, barren, windswept spot (see Plate 6.3). It had reduced in height since the County Council gave planning permission for a coal

recovery exercise in 1994. We could no longer see it from our house, to the east of the A19, but it was still clearly visible from the main road and the local road into Murton.

Plate 6.3. Dalton Flatts Brownfield Site

So at first I thought only of the advantages such a development would bring. It was not until I saw a report on the local news one evening that I became aware of the conflicting opinions towards this development at the site. The report showed a large group of people, from Murton, going to the County Council in Durham to rally **for** the development. The County Council was against the development due to the impacts that it might have upon the towns of Peterlee and Seaham; and particularly upon issues of sustainability and regeneration. There were a number of other objectors to the development, such as other local authorities concerned about impacts upon their town centres; private operators concerned about impacts upon their businesses and the public

concerned about impacts upon their locale. Conversely, there were a number of supporters for the development, most notably the District of Easington Council and local supporters from the Murton area.

When the application for development was submitted to the local planning authority, the District of Easington, a decision was made to grant planning permission (District of Easington, 1998c). In reaching this decision the Council highlighted the material planning considerations and government advice that had been taken into account, these are illustrated in Table 6.4 and reflect a concern to frame the debate firmly within the frames of sustainability and regeneration. In granting planning permission, the Council acknowledged that much of the proposal did not accord with national, strategic nor local policy but used a number of claims to warrant their decision to grant planning application, discussed in subsequent chapters.

Easington District Plan Durham Structure Plan Planning Policy Guidance Note 1. General Policy and Principles Planning Policy Guidance Note 6: Town Centres and Retail Developments Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport Coalfield Taskforce Report: Making the Difference White Paper: A New Deal for Transport

Table 6.4 Material Planning Considerations in the Dalton Flatts Planning Application

The proposal was, inevitably, 'called in' by the Secretary of State, and a public inquiry was held in May, 1999[ix]. It became apparent, after an initial examination of the emerging debates, that the proposed development at Dalton Flatts was of significant relevance to this research thesis. A number of actors, from a variety of backgrounds, were utilising

claims to sustainability and regeneration to argue their cases either in support or objection to the development. It was clear that the arguments at the Public Inquiry and the subsequent decision would revolve largely around issues of sustainability and regeneration. Also the context would be quite specifically about *coalfield* regeneration, due to the situation of the site. In consequence, then, the decision was taken to use Dalton Flatts as a unit of analysis and to follow the utilisation of discourses and performances of regeneration and sustainability throughout the Public Inquiry.

6.5.2.1 Evidence Collected within the Dalton Flatts Unit of Analysis

The choice of Dalton Flatts as a relevant unit of analysis emerged through an initial examination of relevant documents and observations. The public inquiry into the proposed development provided an ideal opportunity for observational field work. The inquiry was held in May 1999 and ran for eight days. I attended every session to observe and record the process in as much detail as possible. This was achieved via the tape recording, overtly, of the inquiry, which was subsequently transcribed, and added to detailed fieldnotes. My role shifted from that of a complete observer (having no interaction and trying to remain anonymous) to observer as participant and complete participant; there were times when members of the local community tried to draw me into debates or some attendees assumed that I was a journalist and tried to tell me their 'story' and obtain my thoughts on the development. Sometimes I told them I was a researcher from the University of Durham and at other times I added that I was also local, in that I lived across the road. All of this information was noted in the field record. I also collected printed materials that were made available to the public, such as copies of closing statements and campaign material from the local action group. In addition, I took

a number of photographs including campaign activities and the hall in which the inquiry was held.

An initial process of open coding was undertaken on the evidence collected. This revealed 'themes' to be explored and the appropriate actors/ groups to interview. Tables 6.3 (column two) and 3.1 illustrate the evidence collected. In total eight interviews were conducted with the main participants in the inquiry. The focus group interview was conducted with members of the local action group. I found one of the members to be particularly helpful and held a number of separate meetings and telephone conversations with him. I also attended any public meetings that occurred, such as a meeting run jointly by the District Council and the Developers to report on progress in March 2000. Field records were kept of observations and conversations, and all interviews were taped and subsequently transcribed.

Numerous documents were collected throughout this field work period. I was also able to obtain copies of evidence given by 'other parties', such as the MP for Easington, during the inquiry. I was particularly fortunate to be given, by one interviewee, a set of the 'core' documents used within the inquiry. In addition to these forms of document, I also monitored and kept all local newspaper articles that focused upon the development.

6.5.3 Single Regeneration Budget Rounds 5 and 6

The SRB is a form of government funding aimed at providing resources to local partnerships to conduct regeneration initiatives (see section 5.5.2.2). There had been five 'rounds' of SRB monies at the time of the field work, and SRB was currently running in round 5 and bidding for round 6 was in preparation. SRB monies provide a sizeable

proportion of the money entering the region for the purposes of regeneration, and the SRB 5 project in the region was a particularly large partnership, running on a scale never before seen in the area. So from the outset an examination of SRB 5 would prove relevant to the thesis, given the generic SRB aims towards regeneration and sustainability (see section 5.5.2.2). What proved particularly pertinent, however, was the specific nature and unfolding performance of the SRB 5 project within East Durham.

I was aware that the District had been successful in obtaining SRB 5 money from my initial review of regeneration projects occurring in the district. It was part of the wider successful SRB5 bid: '*Integrated Regeneration in County Durham and Darlington*'. This bid represented the first attempt to work at an integrated sub-regional partnership level in the area. The bidding document claimed that the partners represented a wide range of public, private, voluntary sector and community organisations (County Durham & Darlington Regeneration Partnership, 1999). The strategic vision for the bid drew heavily upon regeneration and sustainability discourses;

> "To achieve sustainable improvements in the overall social well being and economic competitiveness of the Area, by bringing about the conditions which will enable and empower disadvantaged and vulnerable people to achieve a full and satisfying quality of life, with the necessary skills, opportunities and resources to realise their economic and social aspirations." (County Durham & Darlington Regeneration Partnership, 1999:2)

Such themes also pervaded throughout the strategic objectives;

1. To achieve greater co-ordination between strategic and local approaches to regeneration and the effective involvement of communities
2. To improve routes into training and work, to improve educational attainment and address related issues of social exclusion, disaffection and disadvantage
3. To improve the competitiveness of business and the local economy.

4. To improve and develop the capacity of the voluntary sector and community groups such that they can support local community led regeneration.
5. To improve accessibility to opportunities and services for isolated and disadvantaged groups.
6. To improve the living conditions and health of residents of the Area
7. To tackle areas of particular localised need and factory closure areas.

(County Durham & Darlington Regeneration Partnership, 1999:4-6)

The use of such discourses alone, within the context of regeneration in the case study area, would signify relevance to this thesis. The ways in which this process played out in Easington, however, proved *particularly* interesting. I became acutely aware of this when attempts were made to draw me into the regeneration performance. This happened as a result of the SRB5 package that was planned for Dawdon and Parkside (see Figure 3.4 for locations) where,

> "Proposed projects include the selective clearance and improvement of private sector ex-colliery housing in Dawdon, along with physical improvements to the adjoining council housing estate at Parkside. The Parkside programme would also involve selective clearance and the development of new low cost housing by the private sector." (County Durham & Darlington Regeneration Partnership, 1999:7)

The proposals for Parkside had sparked a controversy. The Parkside Resident's Association (PRA) claimed that the residents had not been consulted on the proposed bid, as required in SRB 5 Bidding Guidance Annex E (see Appendix 9 for details) (DETR, 1998h). They intended to fight the decision to demolish occupied homes by demonstrating that the residents did not agree with the proposals in the SRB5 bid, via an 'independent survey'. It was at this point, in November 1999, that I was drawn into the fray. PRA had contacted my supervisor[x] for help with the survey, he in turn had suggested that I might be interested in working with them. Unfortunately I soon

discovered when I met with the group, that it was assumed I would conduct the survey. I managed to 'extricate' myself from that role and remain as an observer in the processes that evolved from that point onwards.

I 'stayed' with this unit of analysis because it was highly relevant to the thesis on two levels. Firstly, the wider context of SRB and its implementation at the local level, as outlined above, inevitably draws upon discourses of sustainability and regeneration. Of greater interest were the performances and processes via which the regeneration initiatives were delivered, or indeed initially conceived and subsequently consulted upon. In the case of Parkside, it seemed that the regeneration rhetoric of involving people in the regeneration of their own areas had not been upheld. In addition, it appeared that issues of sustainability were being omitted from the debate, such as whether or not the demolition and rebuilding of new houses for sale represented a sustainable 'act'.

6.5.3.1 Evidence Collected within the SRB5 Unit of Analysis

Observation and general access within this unit of analysis was greatly influenced by the fact that I was 'drawn' into the processes at play. Having initially outlined SRB5 as relevant to the thesis it was highly fortuitous to be provided with such an opportunity. I was able to remain in contact with PRA and attend its meetings. Once again my role as observer/ participant shifted on occasions. I attended public meetings, held by the PRA, and was asked to speak to the audience as an 'expert'. I declined, remaining in the audience to take notes, and covertly tape record the meeting (the tape recorder remained in my bag). On one occasion I was mistaken as an employee of the council and received some abusive comments.

This unit of analysis revealed some highly sensitive topics. Some research participants requested not to be quoted, and in some instances even declined my requests to tape record the interview. On one occasion a local government officer was particularly difficult to interview, he refused to allow me to use the tape recorder, dictated responses for me to note down and gave distinctly guarded responses. He also requested a copy of my notes when I had typed them up. Access to interviewees was difficult, given the highly sensitive nature of the problem that developed. For instance, PRA took court action against the District Council, so it was not surprising that some actors remain sceptical about their involvement in my research.

In terms of finding research participants, I adopted a combination of snowballing and identification of key agents from documents. The SRB5 bid highlighted the main agents involved and where it did not I was directed to interviewees by various other actors. The range of interviewees varied, including representatives from the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. In total 14 interviews were conducted (see Table 6.3 column 3). This reflects the highly diverse nature of the SRB5 partnership. Focus groups were held with the PRA and the Dawdon Resident's Association (DRA). Both RA's formed part of the SRB5 proposals. I also collected appropriate documents and newspaper clippings relevant to the developments at Parkside.

6.5.4 The East Durham Coast and the "Turning the Tide" Project

The East Durham coast extends for 18km from Ryhope Dene to Crimdon Dene (see Figure 6.3). The natural vegetation of the coast is paramartime Magnesium Limestone grassland, and much of the coast has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI[xi]), because this is the best example of this form of vegetation in Britain.

There are also important fauna, such as the rare Durham Argus Butterfly. These SSSIs form a thin strip along the cliff top and the remaining landward coastal zone is characterised by arable land, reclaimed, derelict or contaminated colliery sites. The beaches are varied in quality with some exhibiting the worst examples of despoliation such as blackened beaches, derelict structures and poor water quality. The beaches were once attractive and popular, especially with day-trippers and holidaymakers. Crimdon, in particular, was a popular destination, and was once a 'thriving' seaside resort (see Plate 6.4). The coast, however, was gradually despoiled by the tipping of waste from the six large collieries that were positioned on the coast (see Figure 6.3).

Having lived in East Durham since 1991, I was all too familiar with the impact of coal mining upon the coast and beaches. Then, whilst undertaking my 'general' level examination of current policy and initiatives, I highlighted the coastal regeneration project of TTT as a possible unit of analysis. This project stemmed from a long standing concern with the coastal problems caused by the mining industry. The EDTF in 1993, for instance, highlighted the need to tackle the despoliation, as part of the overall regeneration of the area. It was not until 1995, however, that an opportunity to bid for Millennium Commission funding arose.

A partnership of 13 organisations (see Table 6.5) formulated a bid for the funding. They were successful in obtaining Millennium Commission funding, and drawing down EU funding (ERDF), to undertake a £10 million Millennium Project called 'Turning The Tide'. The bid outlined the 'Vision for the Coast':

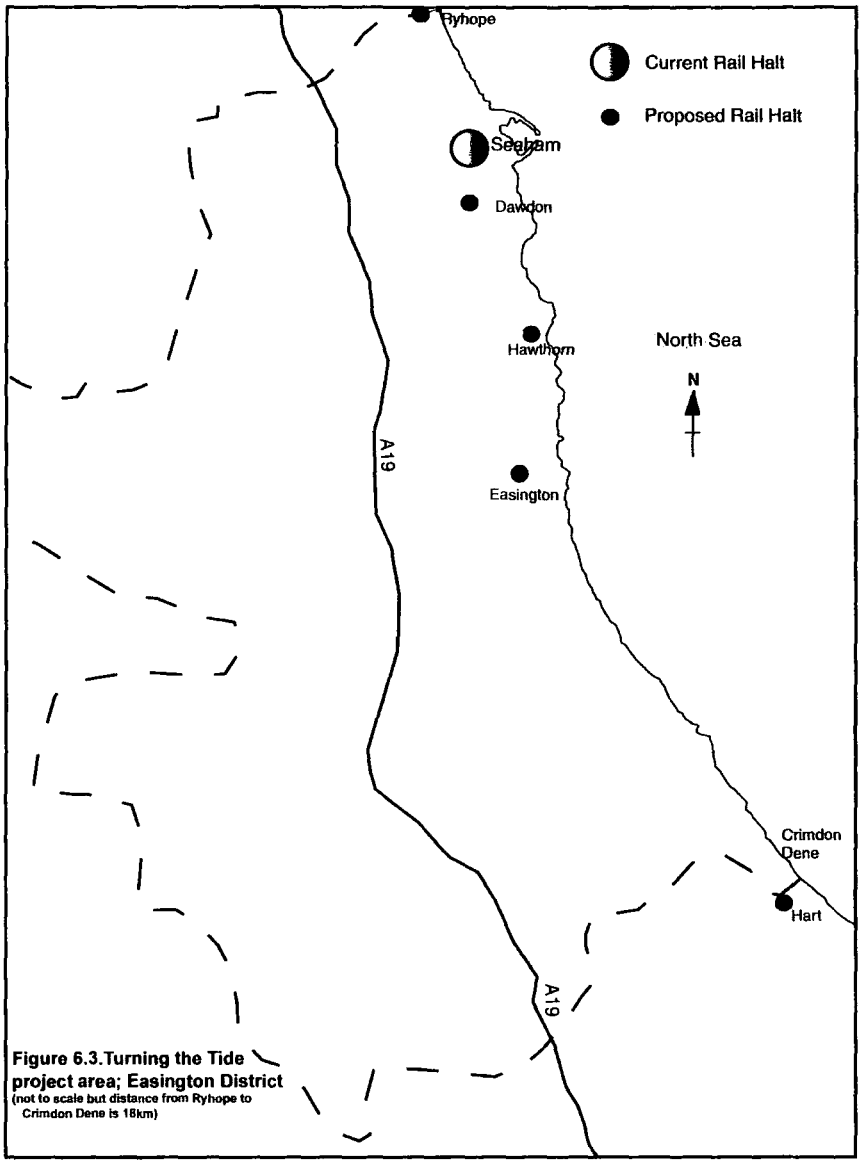

Figure 6.3.Turning the Tide project area; Easington District
(not to scale but distance from Ryhope to Crimdon Dene is 18km)

"The East Durham Task Force envisages the Durham coast of the future to be environmentally healthy, open, accessible, cared for and well managed. We want to see the natural landscape restored , clean beaches and bathing waters, healthy marine habitats, a semi-natural cliff top with magnesium limestone grassland thick with wild flowers, lush wooded denes rich in wild life, essential development sited sensitively and blending into the landscape, eyesores cleared and a comprehensive footpath network. Above all, we want to see local people and visitors enjoying the peace and natural beauty of the Durham coast once again." (East Durham Taskforce, 1995: rear cover)

This vision was underpinned by a threefold philosophy;

- To restore, enhance and conserve the environmental quality of the Durham coast.
- To encourage sustainable use and enjoyment of the Durham coast.
- To rekindle local pride and a sense of ownership of the Durham coast.

Plate 6.4 Postcard of Crimdon Dene circa 1950s

The project had diverse aims and objectives, reflecting the varied agendas and backgrounds of the partner organisations involved. From the outset there existed the potential for conflicting and competing claims to regeneration and sustainability, which are clearly alluded to in the vision for the coast, and the underlying philosophy, whereby a rhetoric of the need for nature conservation exists simultaneously with a desire to increase development and attract tourists.

The greatest conflicts arising out of the project, however, were rooted in the changes made to the coast and local community access to the beaches. When I started the field work I was aware of a conflict that had occurred between the TTT team and a group of

anglers at Horden. The anglers claimed that the project had removed vehicular access to the beaches that had been in place for years. The TTT project worked with the anglers to explain the need to restrict access in environmentally sensitive areas, and also pointed out that the access had never been a public right of way, merely a by product of coal mining activities. I was not aware, however, of the emergent conflict arising at Easington Colliery.

Durham County Council
Easington District Council
The National Trust
One NorthEast
The Countryside Agency
Northumbrian Water
English Nature
The Wildlife Trust
Environment Agency
Port of Seaham
Groundwork Trust
Northern Arts
European Community: ERDF
Millennium Commission

Table 6.5. Partners in the Turning the Tide Project

I was particularly fortunate to meet a local parish councillor whilst I was conducting part-time work on an ESRC funded project (see chapter 3.2), which involved cold-calling on former miners and their partners. The couple gladly completed the questionnaire for that research project and we then started to chat about Easington in general. They proceeded to tell me about the issues they, and members of the residents association, had with the TTT project work on the former Easington Colliery site, including the cliffs and beach there. Their main complaint was that they had not been

involved in the process of project implementation, and as a result the work done had not been for the local community, it was not what they wanted, nor what the original plans had suggested would occur. Their greatest complaint was that there was no easy foot access to the beach, where there once had been. They seemed determined to do something about 'it' and to take their complaints higher than the TTT project team if necessary.

Once again I was struck by claims from community members that they had not been involved in the processes of regeneration. This seemed particularly ironic given TTTs philosophy: 'To rekindle local pride and a sense of ownership of the Durham coast'. So, in addition to the potential conflicting aims of the project, it seemed that the project's philosophy, which drew heavily upon regeneration rhetoric, had somehow failed. Thus TTT demonstrated itself as an appropriate unit of analysis.

6.5.4.1 Evidence Collected within the Turning the Tide Unit of Analysis

A documentary collection and analysis procedure was undertaken to establish the relevance of this unit, and to identify the main regeneration and sustainability issues. In addition, I collected literature outlining the backgrounds of all the partners involved in the project, specifically focusing upon their statements and claims to regeneration and/ or sustainability. I originally aimed to interview a representative from each of the partnership agencies and members of the TTT project team. This proved a complex process. Identifying an individual within each organisation was difficult. One of the project workers at TTT suggested three contacts, with which I arranged interviews. These were not entirely beneficial, for instance, talking to landscape architects about the wider ramifications of the project to regeneration and sustainability proved difficult, with

both myself and the interviewee becoming increasingly unsure as to why we were engaged in the interview at all. Fortunately some interviews at the more general level were able to fill in these 'gaps'. For instance talking to the Executive Directors of the District Council proved particularly valuable in terms of obtaining evidence on TTT.

In total 11 interviews were conducted with representatives from nine of the partnership organisations, one TTT project officer and one local activist (see Table 6.3). Where I was unable to interview a partnership representative I held a telephone interview, in a similar fashion to the interview format, and made detailed field notes. The local activist, interviewed, was the Chair of an environmental action group that had been campaigning for improvements to water quality on the coast for a number of years. I wanted to run a focus group with members of the action group, however, the chair claimed that they were too busy with their campaigns, but that he could spare time to talk to me. I was fortunate to 'discover' my focus group via the local councillor I met in Easington Colliery. She gathered together a group of people (mainly members of the RA) who had concerns about the work that had taken place on the coast, and I was able to conduct a group interview.

During the observations for this unit of analysis I felt that my role was more delineated into that of observer as participant. Fewer attempts were not made to draw me into the 'action' and I was often able to sit and observe from a fairly anonymous position. For instance, I attended a presentation given by a TTT officer to a group of walkers, and I had no need to interact with people in any way. To other members of the audience I was merely another walker.

6.5.5 Settlement Renewal Initiatives

SRIs are part of the key objectives for the area, as outlined by ETDF. They are a rolling programme of village based regeneration projects. The District's Local Plan claims that;

> "To address the problem of economic, environmental and social malaise a rolling programme of village based regeneration projects have commenced. The Settlement Renewal Initiative seeks to target resources into a relatively small geographical area to maximise their impact through the implementation of a comprehensive range of co-ordinated improvements ranging from landscaping, the creation of recreation areas, housing and commercial refurbishment and the provision of community based facilities." (District of Easington, 1998a:47)

The first SRI was established in 1991 within the settlements of Wingate and Station Town (see Figure 3.4). The project came about as a proposal stemming from the '*ECOTEC Report*' and a project design and funding scheme provided by the Civic Trust. In order to ensure that limited resources were not 'diluted', the aim was to demonstrate a sizeable impact in one settlement. This would then demonstrate the potential benefits for other areas (ECOTEC, 1988). In addition, the project would involve numerous partners, including the 'community', working towards the goal of village renewal, which was the first multi-agency partnership within the District (see Table.6.6 for list of partners).

The focus of this first SRI was very much on the physical (and visual) enhancement of the settlements. However, there were also considerable claims made to a new format of regeneration: 'community based regeneration'. A promotional leaflet for the Wingate and Station Town SRI claimed that the project was,

> "one of a growing number of community based regeneration schemes throughout the country. It aims to bring together in a spirit of partnership, local

> authorities, businesses, and local residents to improve the environment, economy and community."

This growth of community based regeneration projects is documented in section 5.4.1, reflecting wider dissatisfaction with the regeneration policies of the 1980s (Smith & Schlesinger, 1993). The Wingate and Station Town SRI was perceived as an 'experimental' new model for village regeneration (not only for the district, but with wider appeals). It reflected attempts to adopt new forms of regeneration policy and practice such as: arms-length management (with the local authorities distancing themselves from the project management); community empowerment; longer term self-sustaining regeneration; multi-agency partnerships and so on. I worked on the project for three months in 1992 as a placement student, from my Masters Degree programme. Subsequently I conducted research into this 'new' form of regeneration using this SRI as a case study (see Smith, 1992). Whilst there were considerable problems associated with delivery and working in partnership this remained a 'positive' and exciting new model for village renewal.

Durham County Council
Easington District Council
The Civic Trust
The Rural Development Commission
Rural Community Council
The Countryside Commission
East Durham Groundwork Trust
The local community

Table 6.6. Partners in the Wingate and Station Town SRI (1991-1995)

The SRI programme 'rolled-on' to Murton in 1995, and then Easington (1996), Horden (1997) and Blackhall (1998) (see Figure 3.4 for locations). Given my involvement in the first SRI it seemed highly plausible that a unit of analysis based upon the SRIs would

yield interesting evidence in terms of sustainability and regeneration. I particularly wanted to explore how the 'new' model had worked when it rolled on. Had the community based model held up to practice and withstood the test of time? Had the teething problems of partnership been resolved? Had issues of sustainability come to play a greater part? Thus the decision was taken from the outset of the research process to use SRIs as a unit of analysis within which to explore the discursive and performative practices of regeneration and sustainability.

6.5.5.1 Evidence Collected within the SRI Unit of Analysis

For this unit of analysis I relied heavily upon my previous experiences and work on SRIs in the district- specifically the Wingate and Station Town project. I was able to use my original research contacts and build upon evidence gathered in 1992. A total of six interviews were conducted (see Table 6.3 column 5), three of which were with people I had interviewed in 1992. Interviews were conducted with the project leaders for all the current SRIs, and I still have a transcript of my interview with the first project leader from 1992. In addition, it was possible to interview the Head of Regeneration at the District Council and the EDTF manager.

6.6 Summary

Official statistics rarely reflect the full extent of problems in former coalfield areas (CCC, 1995). This is due, in the main, to the issue of 'hidden unemployed' (Beatty *et al*, 1997). In addition, a reliance upon 'statistics' to determine the 'problems' of an area can sometimes mask the experiences of actually living in the area. The first part of this contextual chapter has woven together standard indicators of deprivation with a more qualitative, indeed ethnographic, approaches to provide a rich and in-depth portrayal of

life in the East Durham (former) coalfield at the time of this thesis. The aim has been to allow the everyday life of East Durham to emerge from an ethnography constructed by myself with the aid of local voices (see sections 3.5 & 6.3). The result demonstrates that the area still experiences high levels of deprivation and an overwhelming sense of alienation, amongst the local populous, from the processes aimed at alleviating such problems. In addition, two 'Easingtons' have emerged. One which is a desperate place in need of help and another which has a bright future and would be a great place for any investor to locate. These themes are further explored throughout the subsequent chapters.

The latter part of this chapter has contextualised the policies and projects aimed at regenerating the area, which form the bedrock of evidence for this thesis. Particular attention has been focused upon providing a transparent account of how the evidence was collected. The relevance of each unit of analysis is described, alongside comment upon the embeddedness of the unit to wider efforts towards regeneration in the region. The subsequent chapters explore the substantive concerns of the thesis, such as identifying the key actors, outlining the main regeneration foci, and exploring how constructions of regeneration and sustainability have circulated and been adopted by the various actors for a multitude of agendas.

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[i] Geographically I am defining the East Durham coalfield as the administrative district of Easington.
[ii] Sometimes referred to as the 'Sheffield Hallam University' report.
[iii] Care should be taken here to note that the majority of these 'hidden' unemployed were unable to work due to ill health- therefore they were actually 'economically inactive'.
[iv] Former agricultural workers.
[v] All names, in this section, are fictions to protect the anonymity of the research participant. But the stories are those I was told.
[vi] In this case the East Durham coalfield was defined as including areas within the Borough of

Sunderland.

[vii] For example, I met a community development worker at my focus group in Trimdon and later interviewed her; she in turn suggested further possible interviewees which were particularly useful.

[viii] Once developed 'Dalton Flatts' became 'Dalton Park'

[ix] "The application was called in for decision by a direction made on 7 January 1999 under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, because it may conflict with national planning policy on important matters... the following were matters about which the Secretary of State particularly wished to informed for the purpose of his consideration of the application:

(1) the extent to which the proposed development conflicts with the relevant policies in the adopted and emerging development plans;
(2) the extent to which the proposed development conflicts with the advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 with regard to:
    (a) sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres;
    (b) the need to ensure that new retail development is genuinely accessible by modes of transport other than the private car;
    (c) whether the "sequential approach" has been correctly applied;
(3) the extent to which the proposed development conflicts with the advice in Planning Policy Guidance Notes 6 and 13 with regard to its likely effect on overall travel patterns and car use, and the need to reduce the growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, and the reliance on the private car;
(4) the implications of the proposed development for the regeneration of the former coalfield site sin Easington and the extent to which it will help secure those wider regeneration objectives;
(5) any other relevant matters which may be raised by the inquiry" (The Planning Inspectorate, 1999:1-2)

[x] Prof. Ray Hudson, University of Durham.

[xi] Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are sites statutorily notified and protected by English Nature because of their plants, animals, geological or physiographical features. SSSIs cover approximately 6.8% of England's total area.

7.1 Who's Involved in Regenerating East Durham?

The aim of this chapter is to address research question number two: who are the key actors and agencies in coalfield regeneration? Key players have been identified via an in-depth analysis of documents, interviews and observations (see section 3.4 for details). Throughout the research process it became abundantly clear that a *myriad* of actors, agencies, and bodies existed within (and out-with) the regeneration processes of East Durham. This *myriad* is highly complex and far reaching; and therefore difficult to define. This chapter identifies the various players, groups, entities and objects[i], and their respective, and inter-related, roles within the processes of regeneration operating in East Durham, during the period of evidence collation. The aim is to assess the various roles assigned and adopted within the myriad in order to facilitate the exploration of the context of social power and legitimacy within the regeneration processes of East Durham. It should be noted that the key players in sustainability, within the regeneration processes, are highlighted within chapters 9 and 10.

7.2 The Myriad

Many research participants confessed that they were confused by the various roles of the numerous individuals that they come into contact with during their work in the regeneration field. Some suggested that this was due to the significant number of actors who had temporal roles,

> "one of the problems that the district has suffered from...is that its being flooded out with workers who are coming in for a year here, a year there." (PSO- 52)

Such workers are often 'parachuted' into the area with quite specific remits and short term contracts. An agency obtains funding for a post based on a set of specific criterion and employs the worker on this basis. The type of work involved is typically community development of some format or another; for instance youth work, community enterprise initiatives, and so on.

In structuring this analysis of the *myriad*, I have assigned institutions, individuals and objects to one of six sectors: public, quango, voluntary, private, community and others. These are illustrated in Table 7.1. This is by no means an exhaustive list of all those involved within the regeneration of East Durham, but it is indicative. A certain degree of subjectivity is involved in assigning the institutions and individuals to these groups, as some actors have multiple memberships. Project workers or local councillors are also members of the community, and sometimes serve on the community partnerships. The following sections briefly outline the roles of those included within each of the sectors portrayed by Table 7.1.

7.2.1 The Public Sector

The agencies, institutions and individuals associated with the public sector form, by far, the largest segment of the regeneration myriad. The range can run from European Parliament to the officer working at the coal face of regeneration policy delivery (see Table 7.1- column one). Each public sector institution can play a number of roles; such as legislator, regulator, policy driver, priority setter, initiative implementer, funder and so on. There are, however, important

differences to these roles at the differing levels of government. The aim here is to briefly outline how each institution is involved and perceived within East Durham's regeneration.

European Government

'Europe' is perceived as that somewhat faceless provider of funding and the "last stop" for making protests. For instance, when individuals in community groups talked of Europe it was generally in context of where they would next take their 'cases/ causes' if they were not heard, to satisfaction, at the national level (having already failed at the local level). They also talk of lobbying European Parliament for justice on certain issues, such as the conflict with TTT and local beach access. More generally, however, Europe is seen as a source of funding; particularly by local government officers. This funding comes with strict criteria attached but sometimes it is over and above the sorts of funding opportunities available from central government (see section 5.5.2.1 for details).

Central Government

Central Government is often viewed in a similar fashion to Europe, but with a heightened political context. For instance, a number of officers commented upon the political importance of certain funding regimes;

> "its very much a question of what the Government wants to do.....
> it's a great political tool- SRB" (PSO-52)

	Public Sector	Quangos	Voluntary Sector	Private Sector	"The Community"	Others
Institutions	European Union: • e.g. ERDF, ESF Central Government: • e.g. DETR, SEU • Environment Agency • English Nature • Countryside Agency • Millennium Commission • Lottery Commission Government Office for the North East Durham County Council: • e.g. Environment & Technical Services; Economic Development & Planning; LA21 unit District of Easington Council: • e.g. Housing; Inward Investment & Project Development; Regeneration; Planning & Building Control Parish Councils Durham Constabulary	One North East (RDA) East Durham Taskforce Coalfield Taskforce Coalfield Regeneration Trust Turning the Tide Partnership SRB5 Packages Managers Group	Durham Co-Operative Development Agency Durham Rural Community Council East Durham Groundwork Trust East Durham Villages Consortium National Trust Durham Wildlife Trust Northern Arts Northern Training East Durham Business Club	Private Developers: • e.g. Beazer Partnership Homes, Matthew Fox Developments Ltd British Coal Port of Seaham Retailers Utility Companies: • e.g. Northumbrian Water Private Landlords Housing Associations • e.g. CTAB; Banks of Wear; Three Rivers Consultants • e.g. Chesteron's; Ove Arup; GL Hearn Public Relations Agencies Solicitors • e.g. Adams Solicitors	Community Partnerships Resident's Associations Local Communities/The Public Interest Groups • e.g. Peterlee Walkers Activist Groups • Dalton Flatts AG • Seaham Envtal Association Miners/ Mining Communities The Socially Excluded The Empowered The Aged Youths & Children The Disabled Employed/unemployed	The Media • e.g. TV, Radio, Newspapers The Famous • e.g. The Queen, Tony Blair, David Bellamy Hollywood • e.g. Billy Elliott, Aliens 3, Get Carter Heroes/ Villains Outsiders/ Tourists/ Inward Migrants Official Visitors • e.g. Polish Dignitaries The Environment • e.g. nature, the coast, land, people, roads
Individuals	Prime Minister Secretary of State for the Environment Ministers for European Parliament Ministers of Parliament County, District, Town & Parish Councillors Officers of the Councils Project Workers Planning Inspectors Local Government Ombudsman	Officers for these agencies	Officers for these agencies Community Development Workers Youth Workers Volunteers Project Workers Architects Artists	As above	As above	

Table 7.1. East Durham's Myriad of Regeneration Institutions and Individuals

Central Government was commonly described, by local officers and community partnerships, as being 'removed' from the local level. It was suggest that Government sets priorities and establishes initiatives with a political agenda, and as such often do not reflect needs at the local level;

> F2: It depends if you're a Government project or not, it depends if you are a priority, where the plans are, the spending.
> F4: A lot of the priority seems to come from areas that are drug riddled, violent crime and that, and then they seem to get priority. And all the time the quiet little villages are getting put back to the back burner. (Thornley1 FG-28)

Many local people that I spoke to felt that the Government was not focusing enough attention on the area, even after the production of the Coalfield Task Force Report in 1998, and subsequent promises from the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott. Indeed, the use of the Task Force Report, and the position of the Labour Party, within the case of Dalton Flatts, is indicative of this. Much was made, by those supporting the development, of the Report in terms of indicating Government's concern for the Coalfields (this is explored at length in Chapter 9, see section 9.2.2.1 in particular). One member of the DAFG told me that he would cut-up his Labour Party membership card in front of the media if the planning application was rejected. During other aspects of the fieldwork I encountered difficulties with access to research respondents. For instance, whilst conducting doorstep surveys[ii] one man refused to participate and asked me if I thought it was "too little too late- all this regeneration stuff?".

Regional Government

Since the introduction of Regional Governments within the UK, OneNorth East (the RDA) has come to play a significant role as gatekeeper to SRB monies. It has

also been viewed as somewhat removed from the local level. For instance, the former executive director at the District Council suggested that there was a lack of appreciation for certain social issues, and that Regional Government;

> "shouldn't be visiting just via us they should be out-placed in these areas. If we need anything, we've got to go to Government Office, we've got to go up there and talk to them in their ivory tower." (PSO-18)

This officer seemed to resent, and reflect the views of many others, the lack of autonomy that Regional Government allowed at the local level for regeneration activities.

Local Government

The District Council, by geographical and constitutional definition, has one of the greatest roles to play within the regeneration of East Durham. There are, however, other important local government institutions. The area is operating under a three tier system of local government- County, District and Parish Councils. This includes local politicians at all levels (including of course the MP and MEP for the area), all of whom have their own agendas and priorities. Some geographical differences have resulted in power differentials on the local political scene, which can have a significant impact upon the setting of regeneration priorities. For instance, a participant in a focus group at Thornley noted that,

> "M1: The thing we don't have is any political kick. You've got Peterlee and Seaham who are returning six or seven councillors. If you join them up with Horden, that have four. Easington has three. If you go into a council meeting, there's quite a big vote there for the coast because that's where all the big populated areas are. If we all stuck together, you would go in with Wingate 2, Thornley 2, Wheatley Hill 2 and Deaf Hill 1." (Thornley 2 FG- 76)

The 'perceived' geographical focus of regeneration initiatives upon the coast was a common complaint for many community groups to the west of the District, in villages like Thornley. One focus group member felt that Thornley had been left to "bleed to death" after the closure of the pit in 1970, compared to the colliery villages on the coast which had later closure dates and concentrated efforts of support (see section 6.5.1).

Local councillors can have their own political agendas but it is important to remember that 'anyone' involved in the regeneration of the area is first and foremost a 'human being' with personal and cultural traits. The agency of individuals in social processes such as regeneration has been commented upon in Chapter 2. The objective here is to illustrate how certain socially constructed cultural traits can impact upon regeneration. There is, for example, a particularly patriarchal, white, culture operating within the area. A voluntary sector officer confided that she had,

> "never met so many misogynists, racist, everything is male, ...Its scary, and they call themselves Labour and they call themselves socialist, but they're not..... I mean its the old style trade union.....terribly sexist and everything else. They want to create jobs for men, and they haven't got much interest in anybody else's needs or concerns". (VSO:22)

Throughout my own fieldnotes, I repeatedly commented upon issues of patriarchy and the lack of attention to issues of equal opportunities. I observed numerous sexist, racist and ableist comments (not just amongst officers and politicians, but from the wider public in general too). I also noted that many officers spoke about local communities in a distinctly

paternalistic manner. For instance, whilst answering my question on the future of regeneration for the District, an officer replied,

> "Its like a family circumstance where you know if you've got nine kids, we've got 15/16 parishes – if you had all those kids, everyone of them has a different problem. Some of them might be good at maths, others might be poor at English. Its about helping." (PSO:18)

This paternalistic and patriarchal culture amongst some of the most significant actors and agencies operating within the district can have an important impact upon the culture of regeneration, this is explored further in section 10.3.1.

Officers can also be highly sceptical of researchers, for numerous reasons but often associated with the fact that so many conflicts have occurred with community members. Some officers refused to be taped, and others asked me not to quote them, for fear of fuelling or sparking controversy; or even worse- finding their words used in legal proceedings. The officers work under very stressful conditions, often dealing with very irate members of the public. There is also a considerable amount of stress involved with the funding regimes that are in operation;

> "if you aren't making your targets, if you aren't progressing according to programme, there's a potential for funding to be withdrawn, there's the entire credibility of the agencies who are involved, whether or not you'll be able to draw down other funding from other places if you know that you've had slippage in the programme." (PSO-18)

Sometimes officers can lose sight of their wider remits when faced with the day to day minutia of work issues (particularly those that relate to funding regimes). One officer was highly embarrassed, at the end of an interview, that she had not mentioned 'regeneration' as part of the TTT project aims

when questioned on the topic. Indeed, these are the *key* individuals who 'enable' regeneration to be played out with East Durham and they are working to remits, and within cultures, that often do not reflect the needs of the wider populous. Consequently, the structures of funding and policy that fuel such stressful situations, in which officers often work, are a significant factor in this research agenda and are analysed in Chapter 10 (see section 10.2.1).

7.2.2 Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisations (Quangos)

Another important set of institutions that operate within East Durham and at wider levels are the Quangos. Quangos typify the sorts of partnership organisations that have developed within regeneration practices. They are generally made up from a wide range of (non-elected) bodies, from the private, public and voluntary sectors. As such, comment on these sectors is provided elsewhere in this chapter. Quangos, however, can have significant powers in terms of local policy formulation; policy delivery; and securing of appropriate funding. Moreover, roles within the Quangos can be highly temporal, often established in an opportunistic manner, and with numerous power differentials. Hence, a section dedicated to discussing these 'partnerships' is very much warranted.

Quangos are particularly useful in 'drawing-down' funding from bodies that require match funding. For instance, the large number of agencies involved in quangos such as East Durham Task Force or TTT can amalgamate significant amounts of money to act as match funding (compared to singular institutions). Quangos are also valuable when campaigning and lobbying for attention to be

given to certain issues; such as the work of the East Durham Task Force in drawing national attention to the plight of East Durham.

With large memberships, Quangos can be powerful bodies within regeneration, but they frequently lack local accountability. This is often due to poor structures for community participation set alongside the broad, and frequently disparate, agendas of each agency involved within the Quango. In the case of TTT there were some conflicting priorities, due to partner's agendas, such as the desire for habitat conservation on one hand with the explicit prioritisation of increasing tourist numbers on the other (issues which are explored fully in Chapter 9).

Whilst gathering the evidence I often wondered if there were any 'real' partnership approaches? Or were they merely a means to and end- funding? Listening to stories of how certain projects came about, I was often left with the feeling that the partnerships were highly divisive. For instance, the TTT project emerged in response to an opportunity to bid for Millennium Commission funding. Whilst, the SRB5 round in County Durham & Darlington was encouraged to take a more pro-active *joined-up* approach by Central Government guidance (see section 6.5.3). But how effective were these partnerships? I recalled my time working on the SRI in Wingate and Station Town[iii] and the difficulties of partnership arrangements there, so I often asked my interviewees for their views on partnerships. The overwhelming response was that in theory they were a very good idea, allowing for thematic and cross-thematic focuses upon regeneration (a joined-up approach) but that in practice the organisation and management of the partnership was always difficult,

> "Partnership working is fraught with difficulty, you're always looking over your shoulder (another chuckle), waiting for the knife or looking for the other agenda." (PSO:18)

It is important to note that it is often with these partnerships (frequently of highly dubious membership and power credentials) that important agreements for the regeneration of East Durham are made. For instance, a private developer talking about the partnership process for SRB5 in Parkside noted that,

> "I think what's come out is what we believe is the best solution- was the result of talks, negotiations, meetings bringing our experience, and the experience of the local authority and the councillors, to the table and deciding what overall would be the best solution for the big problems on the Parkside estate." (PD- 45)

"Negotiation" being the important element of this comment- decisions are arrived at via negotiation, but interestingly this private developer does not list the 'community' in his list of 'experts'. Indeed, the significant factor to partnerships is often not who is included but who is excluded (implicitly or explicitly). Subsequent chapters will highlight how 'community' has much less power to participate in the 'negotiation' processes.

7.2.3 The Voluntary Sector

Throughout the research process I found that the voluntary sector tended to be far more reflexive, with wider interpretations of regeneration, than the other sectors outlined in Table 7.1. In addition, voluntary organisations received less scepticism from community groups than the public sector. This was primarily due to the fact that the voluntary sector was not associated with a political agenda. The local community were far less sceptical of the agenda of voluntary organisations, in comparison to the District Council, for instance. There was,

however, criticism of the voluntary sector. This was associated with the lack of continuity with community development workers (as discussed above). The area has experienced a significant number of voluntary sector officers being deployed to work on various aspects of regeneration, all short-term contracts. Many of the participants within the focus groups complained of this problem, for example;

> F2: ..... two and a half year contracts, and then they've gone. You can't do effective development work in two years or three years. What you want is a ten-year contract, and that's the only way. (Thornley 1 FG:28)

A number of groups were aggrieved that just as they got to know a development worker - they disappeared, only to be replaced by someone else, sometimes with a slightly different remit. One group member told me that whenever someone new comes to introduce themselves to the group he asks them "and how long have we got you for?" (Dawdon RA)

This was not only a problem for the community groups but also the community workers themselves. One community development officer told me how she is;

> "constantly fund-raising for my own job, and in reality what is really need is long-term funding for workers." (VSO:20)

She added that if officers are only employed for two years, on a specific project, it is foolish to expect loyalty and for a job to be done well. Officers will inevitably be seeking employment elsewhere before the end of the two year contract. Both officers and community groups stressed the need for a longer term approach to initiatives, in order to build up a good working relationship and achieve significant improvements in regeneration.

7.2.4 The Private Sector

The private sector was often viewed in very favourable terms by other sectors within the regeneration myriad. It tends to get the red carpet treatment and in some cases has even been hailed as a saviour (see section 8.2.3). The public sector, in general, is extremely keen to encourage the private sector, via numerous means, to become a key player (if not *the* key player) within the regeneration of East Durham. In return the private sector is keen to portray itself as heroes, and even philanthropists.

There are, however, some private sector investors who are not welcomed, for instance;

> "seedy landlords or people who want to make a quick buck and think they can buy properties for a few hundred pounds....Its not good for the people who live there, its not good for the people who want to invest." (PSO-31)

The District Council and local community members often spoke of the problems associated with private landlords and their tenants (see section 6.2.5). In some cases the private sector is viewed as too opportunistic, either as private landlords or in the case of Parkside Estate where the resident's association suggested that the housing sector had chosen the prime site within the estate rather than the area that was most in need of regeneration. The private sector is very much economically driven, as evident in the examples provided throughout Chapters 8 and 9 (see in particular section 8.2.3). The motives of the private sector have significant implications for the regeneration of East Durham.

7.2.5 The "Community"

Throughout the subsequent chapters the theme of 'community' and their (so termed) 'empowerment' within regeneration will be highlighted as a key theme of the regeneration processes in operation during the time of this thesis. The 'community' should, of course, be key players within the regeneration of East Durham, if we are to believe the rhetoric of empowerment and the current thrust of regeneration initiatives. Yet, subsequent discussion demonstrates that the community is by no means homogenous. Difficulties occur even with definition (who is the community?), let alone with issues of ensuring participation and joined-up approaches.

Plate 7.1 Dalton Flatts Public Inquiry

There are a number of groups which are identifiable within the regeneration processes operating in East Durham (see section 8.2.4 for details) and are

illustrated in Table 7.1. The groups can be formally established affairs, such as the community partnerships and resident's associations; or groups emerge to deal with controversial issues, such as the DAFG; and there are certain 'sections' of the local community that are categorised into groups. For instance, 'the community' may be spoken about in terms of socio-economic characteristics, such as age, disability, occupation (particularly former miners), the unemployed and so on. Of these groupings the most commonly identified, as in need of regeneration attention, are the children or the youths of the settlements (see section 8.2.1 for regeneration priorities);

> "F2: But the children are the future aren't they?
> F4: We class them as the investment for the future."
> (Trimdon FG:30)

Indeed, children are particularly useful in dramatic settings to make pleas for regeneration. For instance, during the Dalton Flatts public inquiry a group of primary school children were heavily 'involved' in the DAFG case; they attended on day one of the inquiry waving flags that said 'Give Us a Brighter Future', whilst on the final day they sang a song to the inspector (see Plates 7.1 & 7.2).

Plate 7.2 Children sing for the inspector on the final day of the Dalton Flatts Public Inquiry 1999

Other significant community groups are those categorised as the 'excluded'. Although quite who they are and how to 'include' them is rarely addressed by many in the regeneration field. Some officers take a distinctly paternalistic, and sometimes patronising, attitude towards the local communities that they serve (as noted above). In return they receive a poor reception within the community, which in turn has a significant impact upon the role of the community within regeneration. The community, basically, do not play as large a part as they really should. This issue is explored at length throughout the following chapters.

7.2.6 Others

The final set of players identified in Table 7.1 are labelled as 'others' and include groups and individuals such as the media; the famous; those with dramatalogical roles such as villains and heroes; and the environment (in its many guises). These 'players' can have an important role in the regeneration of East Durham. They can be used to justify claims for regeneration, for instance, in the case of TTT much was made of the need to change the coastal image of East Durham from that which was portrayed in the Hollywood movies Get Carter and Aliens 3. In addition, much has been made of the need to reclaim the land on the coast for the purposes of 'nature' (see section 9.2.3 for detailed discussion).

(In)Famous people visiting the district can bring significant attention to regeneration initiatives. For example, when the Queen visited in May 2002 her itinerary within East Durham included a visit to the TTT work that had been conducted on Seaham Promenade; the work in Easington Colliery at the memorial gardens (on the reclaimed site of the former colliery); and further observation of TTT work at Blackhall. The Queen's visit provided an opportunity for the TTT project to validate its work, in a very visual and public manner. The media clearly played an important role too, in terms of transmitting these scenes to the local area, and nationally. The media can of course be utilised by those campaigning for (or against) regeneration initiatives. The DFAG were highly active in their efforts to court media attention, during the calendar year of 1999 almost thirty reports on Dalton Flatts appeared in one local newspaper[iv], and the vast majority of these comments were based upon the opinions of the action group.

In addition, I have categorised visitors, and inward migrants, to the region within the 'others' section. These are the people that some types of regeneration initiatives focus upon attracting to East Durham, like the TTT project which aims to attract tourists, or housing developments which aim to attract executives to settle in the district (see sections 8.2.3 and 9.2.2.1). Some inward migrants, however, are not as welcomed, such as those renting properties from absentee landlords. These are a producing a strain on the social fabric of some of the former colliery settlements, and undermining some regeneration strategies. For instance, many of those who rent in this sector can be classed as having anti-social behaviour, which further adds to the problems the area already suffers (see section 6.2.5 for further comments).

So called 'experts' can also be drawn upon to justify claims for (in)action. Here I refer mainly to private consultants. For instance, in the case of Dalton Flatts the main actors employed consultants to conduct work, such as impact assessments, and present the information in report format and, in person, at the public inquiry. The consultants were portrayed as experts in their field. At the inquiry they were asked to state their credentials (qualifications and work experience in their field of expertise). Their claims were then cross examined, as if in a court of law, by the respective solicitors. The inspector made his decisions based on the information provided by these 'experts' and its airing in public. The point here is that the DAFG were not constructed as 'experts' their knowledge and information was treated as 'public support'. Evidence that they presented was not cross examined by solicitors, implicitly suggesting that it was not worthy of debate. Indeed, who's

knowledge was deemed as the most legitimate forms a recurrent theme throughout this thesis, and will be discussed in section 10.2.2.2.

7.3 Summary

This chapter has identified the key players associated with the regeneration of East Durham. It is far from an exhaustive list, this would be extremely problematic to provide. If we think of these 'players' as part of a series of networks (as discussed in section 2.2.4) that are inter-connected but with differing scales and levels of power, then we begin to accept that there are some players that will remain illusive, and far removed from the action. The key issue here has been to highlight how some of these networks (and *actants*) are employed in the regeneration performances operating in East Durham. The subsequent chapters provide a detailed contextual basis to explore some of the issues that are starting to emerge here, namely issues such as power differentials; differing access to discourses of sustainability and regeneration; and the constraints of certain structures, such as funding regimes, amongst others. All of which are highlighted, using a series of stories, and discussed in the wider context within the following chapters.

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[i] I refer here to the forms of networks described in Chapter 2 (see section 2.2.4) whereby the environment and other such 'natural' entities are not viewed as separate from the social characters involved in these contextual processes. Indeed, they are viewed as being inter-dependant and socially constructed.

[ii] These surveys were conducted during my employment as a research assistant on the ESRC project noted in Chapter 3.

[iii] See Smith, A & Schlesinger (1993) for details.

[iv] Sunderland Echo, North East Press Ltd.

8.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the concepts and contents of regeneration policies within East Durham. This is achieved by utilising the empirical evidence collated for the research process (see Chapter 3 for details of methodology). Common themes that have emerged from a close analysis of the collated evidence provide detailed illustrations of the main contents and concepts of regeneration initiatives; the current priorities within regeneration ethos and practice; and those who are included in, and excluded from, the processes of regeneration. The constructions of sustainability within regeneration discourse are examined in the following chapter; however, common themes are also highlighted within this chapter. The types of activities and rhetorical claims to regeneration are explored with comment upon the ways in which the various participants in the processes operating within East Durham are constructing the main interpretations of regeneration[i].

8.2 In The Name of Regeneration

The aim of this section is to provide a cross sectional analysis of the diverse range of activities taking place, within East Durham, in the name of regeneration. This, in part, addresses research question one: what are the concepts and contents of regeneration policies? Initially the scenery and backdrop, the ways in which certain actors describe the priorities for regeneration within East Durham, will be outlined. Then there will be a focus upon how such problems and priorities of regeneration are being tackled. This is achieved by taking a cross section of the

main components of regeneration (as outlined in Chapter 4), namely physical, economic, and the more social aspects such as education, training, and health.

These components are, however, not mutually exclusive within the context of regeneration. For instance the SRB5 project operating within Dawdon and Parkside contains elements of all three. By deconstructing these aspects of regeneration it is, however, possible to highlight the relative importance placed upon each, at the time of the fieldwork. In addition such a deconstruction of the performances taking place in the name of regeneration provides a basis to explore how the main interpretations of regeneration are being constructed (see section 8.3).

8.2.1 Regeneration Priorities

There has been an inevitable shift in priorities with regards to regeneration over time. Regeneration is clearly a fundamental priority for the District Council, and has been since the closure of the remaining pits and the inception of the EDTF in 1990 (see Chapter 6 for details). The former Executive Director of Economic and Community Development for Easington District Council noted, during interview, that,

> "the Taskforce did set up the framework for our action which covered the environment, transport, education,...economic development in terms of new jobs. But I think we've failed in the sense of providing a proper structure for the people to retrain and re-skill." (PSO- 18)

Within the Council, and many other agencies, there seems to be a recognition that priorities, and attitudes, towards regeneration have altered. As the quote above suggests, the initial focus upon issues of job creation and physical regeneration

resulted in a lack of regard for some underlying issues; such as training. Indeed throughout the fieldwork there was a recognition that the more 'social' aspects of regeneration have not been priorities until very recently. There are numerous reasons for this, not least of which is the political aspect to regeneration,

> "now we're looking towards what I would say is a much more social regeneration ..... I suppose we concentrated, for political reasons, on being able to say we've created x number of jobs this year or last year." (PSO- 24)

The need to provide quantifiable outputs from regeneration activities has tended to govern the setting of priorities. Indeed, the question of *who* sets the priorities is fundamental, for instance one officer noted that the priorities might be,

> "pre-determined by outside agencies. They might be pre-determined by funding arrangements..... so there's all sorts of factors in there that impact and change circumstances. That's the difficulty. We're dealing across a broad front with broad priorities. I mean the overriding priority is regeneration and whatever it takes to bring that about, but underneath that you'll have a whole raft of priorities." (PSO- 54)

Different actors and agencies have divergent views upon the problems and priorities for regeneration within East Durham. For instance public sector officers, local councillors and community members may hold very diverse notions of regeneration. Officers working for the District Council commonly suggested that regeneration is a holistic and geographically challenging process that aims to address the loss of the mining industry within the District. By holistic they tended to refer to the constituent parts as,

> "physical regeneration on the capital side, through to the soft side of regeneration, through to social and community regeneration, economic regeneration." (*op cit*)

This officer metaphorically describes regeneration along a binary axis of being hard and quantitative as opposed to soft and qualitative. Indeed many working within the arena of regeneration used such an axis. More credence, however, has tended to be given to the quantifiable outputs. Therefore is it not surprising to find that priorities have fallen under the categorisations of physical and economic.

In discussion[ii] with community groups working towards the regeneration of their areas, I found that they couched their priorities under the 'softer' axis of regeneration. When I asked the groups what they felt were the main problems faced by East Durham they commonly answered in particularly localised terms and noted that their main issues were with youth disillusionment, which they felt was at the root of problems such as crime, vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse, and general social malaise; long term unemployment; health issues, such as high incidences of depression amongst individuals; poor physical environs; the need to stop outward migration, and ultimately encourage in-migration; housing issues; and a loss of community spirit. These issues were common to all the groups, but differing levels of concern were often expressed for each issue.

The groups also identified local priorities to tackle these problems. They placed differing importance upon certain elements; for instance some groups felt job creation was more pertinent than, say, housing improvements. There seemed, however, to be an overall agreement that it was hard to 'separate out' the priorities for action. In addition, the groups felt that they could identify specific problems but did not have the resources to tackle them;

> "M1: Unemployment, health, run-down villages, and we're **not** getting money to regenerate, and **trying** to get the money is the biggest problem of all." (Shotton FG: 82)

Given that the parameters of regeneration can be set by numerous groups (and individuals) there will inevitably be conflicts. Throughout this chapter the issue of social power and discursive legitimacy will be pervasive. Those who have the ability to influence the parameters of regeneration, either through definition or practice, are generally the more 'powerful'. The priorities for East Durham reflect a gamut of ideas and ideals that range from international, intra-national, national and local perspectives. The following sections highlight how the priorities for regeneration in East Durham have shifted over time and how this has been reflected in regeneration practices on the ground. How have the priorities been addressed, and whose priorities were addressed? These are all key questions to consider whilst deconstructing the constituent parts of regeneration.

8.2.2 The 'Harder' Side of Regeneration in East Durham

This section explores the 'harder' aspects of regeneration practices within East Durham. The need to provide 'hard' evidence of tangible results has emerged, throughout the research findings, as a key factor within regeneration. It is not surprising, then, that within East Durham, the initial focus of regeneration activity during the 1990s was upon physical regeneration. Activities, such as land reclamation, provision of new infrastructure, environmental improvements and housing developments, have provided numerous actors with a vast array of quantitative results, such as acres of land reclaimed or miles of road created, with which to make claims for successful regeneration. For instance, I witnessed

several members of the District Council regeneration team using PowerPoint presentations[iii] to 'drive' home the impressive array of achievements and 'progress' made in these fields (see Appendix 10 for details). The aim of this section is to explore the main claims made for regeneration using such (physical) activities. These include a focus upon altering the image of the area and improving the quality of life in the area in order to achieve 'regeneration'.

'Altered Images'

An important aspect to physical regeneration activities in the district has been the altering of Easington's image to attract investment and people to the area,

> "we're promoting Easington as a place to live, work and invest. We not only have to be able to provide jobs but we also need to be able to provide good quality, suitable housing for people, and also things for them to do in their spare time." (PSO-13)

This rhetorical 'altering images' has been pervasive across all sectors. For instance, an officer with the Countryside Agency, working on TTT, noted that it has been important to,

> "try and get rid of the image of the area as being just, you know, well the real 'Get Carter' image where there was all a load of blackness and desolation about the place, like the surface of the moon...because I think a lot of people still think that. If you could get ...so that...businesses that might want to relocate, you know see it as an attractive place to come to?" (PSO-56)

In this sense the physical regeneration of the coast has served a number of purposes. Not only does it help to cleanse the area of its past and ensure a forward looking culture, but it also demonstrates quantifiable outputs; such as miles of beach reclaimed or land reclaimed for new investment. The purposeful 'reclaiming' of the land is discussed within the following chapter, in the context of

the materialisation of nature (see section 9.2.2). The rhetorical, and physical cleansing of the past has played an important role in the regeneration of East Durham, and many actors reflected upon it. Some felt it was necessary to alter images in order to attract new investment of business and people but a passionate nostalgia for the mining industry remained for many residents. For instance, local councillors wished to use reclaimed land at Easington Colliery pit site to create a mining heritage themed recreational park on the former site of the colliery. By altering the image of the area in terms of improved physical environment; housing; the reclamation of land and provision of infrastructure; and improving retail and leisure facilities; it is hoped that investors, visitors and new residents will be attracted to the District, and therefore significantly add to the regeneration of the area. The whys and hows of this process are particularly interesting and form the focus of the following sub-sections.

Confidence Boosting

A common claim made for physical improvements were that they 'boosted confidence'. It was often asserted that making physical improvements would increase 'investor' confidence in the area. For instance, the private developers[iv] who manage Peterlee Town Centre felt that their investments within Peterlee were important to wider regeneration issues in the District,

> "you're creating a better environment that people feel better going to which generates interest from people moving to the area..... the whole thing creates spin offs. So as Peterlee gets better .... major employers coming in and looking around the area to see whether its worth locating on the Peterlee industrial estates drive round the town centre, have a look, they find out what's going on." (PD- 17)

Thus improvements in the town centre retail and leisure sector may encourage potential investors to take up space upon the EZs. It was commonly suggested that 'confidence' in the East Durham economy was low and that investors were unlikely to be attracted until the 'right' infrastructure is provided. Increased confidence could be levered using economic incentives, such as EZs, or by demonstrating that the area can attract major private investors, such as Modus Properties in Peterlee. In the case of Dalton Flatts the private developers submitted that,

> "Large scale property-led investment will also bring wider economic benefits to the local economy.....This will encourage the presence of new businesses as well as the diversification of existing firms into new product and service areas." (Chesterton, 1999a:33)

Indeed, the *need* for *a* development on the site at Dalton Flatts, to increase confidence in the wider area, became a common theme throughout the Planning Inquiry. It was strongly suggested, by those in favour of the development, that new developments on the site would boost investor confidence and attract businesses to relocate within the area. The argument was that without the development businesses would not locate due to a lack of retail and leisure services, particularly in terms of hotels.

'New Blood'

Another common theme to the physical regeneration rhetoric within the District was the *perceived* need to attract new residents. The mechanisms for achieving this influx of 'new blood' included altering the image of the area and providing suitable infrastructure, such as retail, leisure, employment opportunities and, most

commonly, appropriate housing. A number of community groups reflected upon this in focus group discussions;

> "M1: We've got to get a new identity, and what I think that identity will be, will be a place where people want to live and work elsewhere. We're within twenty miles of all the big cities, six miles off the A1, five miles of the A19." (Thornley 2 FG: 76)

This need for a new identity and role was often linked to concerns for a sustainable, lasting, community. In the aftermath of the pit closures much of the population has declined and the social balance has been significantly altered, such that there are high concentrations of unemployment and age cleavages within the district (see section 6.2.4). To secure a future for the area it has been seen as necessary to attract a better social balance. The District Council, for instance, felt strongly about the need to provide the right sort of infrastructure to attract new people to the district, and in turn bring about 'regeneration' through processes of trickle-down. During the time period of this study, it was evident that the provision of executive housing was at the forefront of Council policy and rhetoric. For example, the Deposit Local plan stated that,

> "The Council is aware of the perceived shortage of suitable sites for high quality, low density executive housing in the District.....The provision of such sites is seen to have the potential to assist the regeneration of the District in two ways. First, providing sites for incoming industrialists can act as a positive incentive to them for locating their businesses within the District. Second, the District is currently under represented by people in the managerial and professional sectors and the provision of such sites can attract and retain entrepreneurs in these sector who would otherwise have moved to adjacent areas." (District of Easington 1998a:80)

Thus, not only will the provision of housing help to attract potential investors but it will also help to diversify the socio-economic structure of the population, and

hence shore up the local economy. Indeed, there was a specific aim to attract a younger executive type to the District,

> "we have to try and attract those sort of people who are younger professionals back into the area to try and get a mix of population, to balance the economy." (PSO- 44)

The aim of attracting fresh 'young blood' to the area has underpinned a number of regeneration processes within the area. In particular, the housing strategy emerging in the district was littered with calls to reduce the Council's oversupply of local authority housing stock, replacing it with executive housing opportunities. This was strongly reflected in the SRB5 programme at Parkside. The private developers, working in conjunction with the District Council on the SRB5 programme, suggested that,

> "The solution [for the survival of the estate]...was clearance of the surplus housing for rent, and replace them with houses for sale – a development of sufficient size and critical mass to be able to make a difference to the environment in the area which would attract the investment of people who were prepared to buy a house in the area." (PD- 45)

In this sense physical regeneration of the housing stock can help to achieve a social balance within the area. The underlying assumption being that with this increased social balance comes increased disposable income and a 'sustainable' community. There are, however, numerous problems with these processes, not least of which are the sustainability issues of prudent resource use, siting of housing developments, and intergenerational equity, all of which are explored at depth throughout the following chapter . Indeed, intergenerational equity, in particular, has tended to take a back seat throughout the processes of physical regeneration, and it is to this issue that the focus now moves.

Improved 'Environmental' Quality of Life and Regeneration

A much more thinly drawn thread throughout the 'harder' regeneration theme is that of improvements for local people. It is there but tends to be over-shadowed by the claims for carrying out work to attract inward investment. Many actors in the voluntary sector were acutely aware of the need to involve local people in regeneration activities and noted that small-scale physical improvements could be a useful first stage in this process. One voluntary sector officer suggested that,

> "for people to be able to walk down a main shopping street, as in Wheatley Hill, and not have tatty boarded-up shops, to be able to just feel that the environment in which you live in is nice.....and I think that can be done in small ways. I don't think we have to have a massive settlement renewal initiative where millions are spent on that front street." (VSO-20)

Others suggested that there should be more work on creating an impetus in the villages to get people involved by doing something visible on the ground. Sometimes smaller scale physical projects could be very useful, such as the organic garden in Wingate.

In summary, physical regeneration has formed a large aspect of regeneration activities taking place in East Durham. Initiatives ranged in scale, from small scale local environmental improvements to shop front facelift schemes in SRI villages, town centre renewal, speculative property-led developments, EZ designations, coastal clean-ups, road building, large scale land reclamation and housing construction. All these activities provide quantitative outputs that facilitate claims to having 'regenerated' the area or achieved value for (public) money. The most common theme of this sort of activity has been that of image enhancement (or

even creation) in order to attract investment. The next section examines another aspect of 'hard' regeneration, namely economic initiatives.

8.2.3 The 'Economic' Regeneration of East Durham

It is difficult to draw clear distinctions between physical and economic regeneration (or even social regeneration for that matter). For the purposes of this section, however, the aim is to examine regeneration practices and rhetorical claims that have a distinctly 'economic' focus. These have tended to include the primary aims of attracting inward investment and creating jobs, alongside economic diversification. For instance, the District Council's Economic Development Strategy for 1998/1999 states that,

> "During the past twelve months a great deal has been achieved in the District with the aim of diversifying and expanding the local economy. Enterprise Zones have seen encouraging levels of interest, grants have been provided to local small companies to encourage them to employ local people." (District of Easington, 1999a:3)

The first strategic objective of the EDTF was to,

> "secure the availability of a good choice of business and industrial land and premises; provide good quality business support measures and develop the tourism potential of the area." (EDTF 1997:5)

This is placed under the heading of 'Economic developments and tourism'. Clearly this objective, and the measures outlined by the District Council, are inter-linked with issues of physical regeneration, but there is also an implicit supply side association of job creation and economic diversification. Within the claims made towards 'economic' regeneration, there is a definite focus upon obtaining economic development and stability through a series of measures such as attracting inward investment using supply side initiatives, like Enterprise Zones;

the supply of 'new' jobs, as opposed to transference, for 'local' people; and increasing economic development via tourism. This section explores examples of the claims certain groups and individuals made towards these measures, starting with economic stability

'Plugging the Leak'

The economic plight of the District has already been highlighted in Chapter 6. The loss of commercial, retail and leisure services with the decline of the coal mining industry has had a severe impact on the area. During a focus group interview, a female participant highlighted some of the issues when she lamented that,

> "we've just had a bank close and we thought it was terrible.....Well, people are going out to other banks in Peterlee, and they're spending their money there.....We don't want them to go outside of this village, we want to keep the people here." (Easington SRI FG:49)

Indeed, her comments are reflected in many initiatives aimed at achieving economic stability within the area. The 'ideal' is to be able to provide facilities within the district and stop the expenditure leakage. During the Dalton Flatts public inquiry, for instance, much was made of the potential for,

> "regeneration in terms of clawing back to Easington a large proportion of the retail trade expenditure was going out of Easington because of the porosity of the facilities in that particular district." (Cons-1)

In many senses this seemed obvious, but there were many other issues underlying the Dalton Flatts case. The following chapter returns to the issue of economic stability in the context of claims to sustainable economies, alongside issues of sustainable transport (see sections 9.2.1 & 9.2.4).

'Roll out the Red Carpet'

The need to attract inward investment to the District had a very high profile within economic regeneration rhetoric and practice. The quantifiable outputs and inputs for economic regeneration provide highly emotive 'facts'. For instance, returning to the example of the presentations given by the District Council's regeneration team, further (proud) claims for the amount of investment that has been attracted to the area were made (see Appendix 10: slide "Progress: income generation projects"). The figures reflect, perhaps, the efforts of the team (and indeed other departments within the Council), including their attitude and approach to potential investors,

> "We've geared up our planning service for example to respond quickly to development. It has become a very significant material planning consideration in our district because of need, we have to approach development and developers very positively." (PSO: 12)

Private developers have tended to get the 'red carpet' treatment in terms of positive and prompt responses from the Council. For example, in the case of Dalton Flatts concern over the fact that the development might undermine the overall regeneration strategy (see section 6.5.2 for details) was dealt with by working in conjunction with the developers;

> "over an 18 month period to put together a portfolio of elements to the scheme that we felt were commercially viable but also that dovetailed with our wider regeneration aims." (PSO: 13)

The Council was particularly sensitive to finding ways of 'fitting' the commercial needs of the private developers with its regeneration aims and priorities. Indeed, all the private developers interviewed were very complimentary about the Economic Development team, one developer said that he felt they were like a

'breathe of fresh air' (PD-16). These comments are hardly surprising when the developers are being treated so well.

The pre-occupation with attracting private developers into the district was often grounded in the rhetoric that 'private investment is better value for money than public investment'. For instance, the secretary of the East Durham Business Club noted, in evidence for the Dalton Flatts inquiry;

> "I do feel it should be emphasised that the Dalton Flatts developers have neither been offered, nor sought any form of public funds to proceed." (Other Parties evidence DF)

The developers themselves also played on this aspect of public versus private monies,

> "I mean the bottom line though Amanda is that this type of the development will enhance the district and it will bring prosperity to the district and more importantly it kick starts the investment, the private investment which is needed up here." (PD: 16)

The need to attract private investment was a recurrent theme. In terms of the 'economic' regeneration of East Durham, there was a distinct pre-occupation with attracting private investment. At times during the fieldwork it felt like this should be achieved at almost any cost.

'Create Jobs, Jobs, Jobs'

An important aspect to understanding this *desire* for private investment is the (perceived) *need* for job creation in the area,

> "we need to provide jobs and we need to change the industrial base from the dependence on a single industry to a much more diversified and robust economy." (PSO: 52)

To exemplify the claims being made with regards to job creation, reference will be made to the Dalton Flatts case. Focusing upon the specific claims reveals a deeper set of issues concerning job creation, such as the political aspects involved; the quality of these jobs; and who is going to fill the posts.

Given the background situation in Easington District, it was hardly surprising to find such a high degree of support, rooted largely in the promise of jobs, for the Dalton Flatts development. For instance, during a focus group interview in Easington Colliery, support for the development was very forthcoming upon the basis that,

> "F3: anything that brings jobs into the area is good, **anything**, because they need them **desperately** around here." (Easington SRI FG:49 *original emphasis*)

Indeed, during a more general interview with an officer of the District Council when discussion turned to the case of Dalton Flatts he noted that the issues within that particular case were,

> "very finely balanced .....the Council's position on that was largely dictated by the jobs issue." (PSO-24)

Furthermore, during a focus group interview with members of the Dalton Flatts Action Group the 'salvation' of job creation offered by the development, in light of recent textile factory closures in the area, was discussed at length;

> "M4: The thing is M1[addressing participant M1] is the clothing factory that's closed, there's about 200 people in the village [of Murton who have lost jobs]. It's not just single people it's families. It's another nail in the economy if you like... But Dalton Flatts could have been the saviour." (DFAG FG:74)

Before the inquiry, the DFAG undertook a considerable amount of campaigning for the development, using the 'jobs aspect'. For instance, a hoarding was erected on the side of the A19 with "1150 JOBS" boldly stated upon it (see Plate 8.1); whilst during the public inquiry the village of Murton was festooned with banners and posters, some of which noted "Making the Difference: 1100 Reasons to Say YES" (see Plate 8.2). The rhetorical case of 'job' creation played a significantly emotive part during the inquiry and subsequent decision.

Plate 8.1 Dalton Flatts Campaign Hoarding

Plate 8.2 Posters that lined the village during the Dalton Flatts Inquiry

The private developers of Dalton Flatts claimed that 1160-1395 permanent jobs (and over 500 construction jobs) would be created. During interview, these developers suggested that,

> "John Prescott and the prime minister issued the coalfield taskforce report to say that they'll throw planning out of the window they want jobs." (PD-16)

They felt particularly aggrieved by the planning inquiry process, noting that;

> "PD2: all we're trying to do or what we're trying to establish. Give them jobs. We should be heroes, we shouldn't be having to spend all this money..... there are at least 1500 jobs, real jobs, jobs they're not part time jobs. They're not mining jobs no..
> PD1: That's right these are **real** jobs." (*op cit*)

Indeed, the developers relied heavily upon claims to job creation, highlighting that they felt they should have been welcomed as 'heroes' for bringing 'real' jobs to

an area such as East Durham. In contrast, the private developers managing Peterlee Town Centre suggested that their proposed regeneration efforts to create 840-980 permanent jobs (and 370 construction jobs) would be placed in jeopardy by the development at Dalton Flatts. Indeed, the Inspector concluded that the proposals for Peterlee would be placed at risk and that,

> "the employment created by the scheme [at Dalton Flatts] would be offset by job losses owing to loss of trade elsewhere....although there is no real evidence as to the extent of any such losses." (The Planning Inspectorate, 1990:39)

and recommended that permission be refused. The Secretary of State overturned the decision of the Inspector, based largely upon the issue of economic regeneration, and the political context of coalfield regeneration; claiming that in this specific case there were very special circumstances with which to justify the granting of planning permission (further discussion of the decision can be found in the subsequent chapter, see section 9.2.1.2).

'Whose jobs?'

An important aspect to the theme of job creation were the claims that local people are able to secure the jobs that have been created as a result of the processes of economic regeneration. An executive director of the District Council noted that the Council had focused upon initiatives to create jobs, and had been, he felt, quite successful. However, he agreed that;

> "the assumption of course is that all of those jobs are going to local people, and that's not a certain assumption to make..... but its certainly a fact that ... the political trumpets start sounding with all the new jobs that we're talking about, a lot of it is not going to local people. Its certainly the better quality jobs, the more professional jobs,

> senior jobs, people can often be brought in from outside of the area." (PSO: 24)

It has proved extremely difficult to ensure that local people get the locally created jobs. This director, however, did not see this problem as an immediate issue given that in the longer term there may be 'trickle-down' benefits from attracting the more upwardly mobile to the district (see previous section for discussion of attracting new residents). He also notes the political *bonus* of being able to highlight the quantifiable output of numbers of jobs created- a significant factor for 'hard' regeneration initiatives and their future funding opportunities.

The businesses (employers) are, however, driven by market forces and not necessarily concerned with regenerative benefits to the area. For instance, a member of the EDTF noted that the Task Force had tried to address the issue;

> "we have talked to a number of firms on a number of occasions, and we've tried to talk about where the jobs are going, are they going to people in the District, because we had a requirement under certain European funding to ensure that 30% of jobs go to people in the District....But the firms themselves have totally different views on that. They don't have the political aspirations that we have." (PSO: 52)

Even in the case of Dalton Flatts, no matter what the private developers may have claimed[v], it will be difficult to assure that local people will take up the posts created. I asked the planning officer involved with the case if there was any way of guaranteeing that the jobs went to local people, and his response was;

> " Well I don't think there is, I mean, it's probably not a planning issue on whether they do. That's not something which the Council could control. But its likely that that will happen and you know I think, particularly the developers that have come forward have a significant commitment to that. I anticipate that a significant amount of jobs will go to local people, and people in the district." (PSO: 12)

This comment perhaps reflects the issue of the *types* of job being created. During the inquiry there were some questions as to the 'quality' of the jobs; given that essentially they will be low-paid posts, sometimes temporary, in the retail and leisure industry. An officer in the District Council's Economic Development team commented, during interview, that,

> "at the end of the day people talk about quality jobs, we are creating quality jobs in a number of the schemes that we have and this proposal will create quality jobs but it will also create jobs that people with maybe low skills, basic retailing jobs, maintaining facilities, serving popcorn and so on. At the end of the day there are still segments of our populous to whom that would be an important step onto the job ladder." (PSO: 13)

He was quite philosophical about the fact that these are the only sorts of posts that *some* local people can aspire to. It would seem to be the case that so long as they have a job, then some form of regenerative activity has taken place- 'its a start', a rung on the ladder. From this rung the only way should be up, with a new set of skills and capacity to work instilled in the employee. Yet the quality, long-term security and wages are equivocal. For instance, whilst discussing the issue of job creation with a group in Shotton their comments reveal a number of important issues;

> "F1: Regeneration I think is bringing jobs into the villages what men can do. I agree with F2– call centre jobs are not a job for a man.
> .....
> F4: All the long term firms in Peterlee and the surrounding areas that have good jobs, they either use agencies or they put them on temporary. So like people are going up there and they might be temporary for four years.
> F2: I think that's terrible
> F4: The thing is if you work with one of them agencies, you can be working alongside somebody else who is getting double the wage for the same job, and I think its scandalous."(Shotton FG:82)

Their concerns are particularly pertinent. Firstly, the jobs being created are probably going to be filled by women. In this sense the jobs do not represent the provision of posts for those who were left without employment due to the collapse of the coal mining industry- the miners. Secondly, whilst efforts to attract companies to the District have been successful (particularly on sites such as Bracken Hill Business Park) and have resulted in job creation, the quality and security of these posts is often poor.

'Bring in the crowds: Tourism- the future industry?'

Another particularly important aspect of the economic regeneration of East Durham has been the focus upon tourism development. As shown above, this was a key theme within EDTF's strategic objectives, and the District Council note in their Economic Development Strategy that,

> "Tourism has become increasingly integrated with the policies of the Economic Development Unit....The Tourism Action Plan is currently being implemented and is worth an estimated £280,000, 1996-1999." (District of Easington, 1999a:13)

One of the largest regeneration initiatives taking place in East Durham, for instance, has had a distinctly tourist development orientation. An important element to the TTT project has been attracting visitors to the coast. The principle being, that once here, visitors will spend money, and a degree of 'trickle-down' will occur, with 'knock-on' benefits of further developments to support the tourist industry; for example,

> "if you've got 300,000 people coming through the district, they are going to spend money, and then the message will then spread – its quite a nice place, go and have a look. So small businesses could well

> start to benefit in terms of say B&B places, cafes, restaurants, cycle hire..... now there's an art gallery on the sea-front at Seaham – it's a tea shop but he sells works of art as well." (PSO-66)

Indeed the SRI steering group at Easington Colliery saw this form of industry as their future:

> "We've got to find an entirely different role for Easington. It's not going to be industry here, so obviously what we set our sights on is the tourism aspect of it – selling our coastline, selling our park, trying to get tourism in, 200,000 people. Hopefully they'll go onto the pit site, they'll go round the beach, and then they'll come into the shops." (Easington SRI FG:49)

Some partners, however, were more restrained in their claims of economic benefit due to the limited numbers of tourists that might be expected. For numerous partners their primary interest in the project lay in issues of nature conservation and ensuring the sustainable usage of the coastal area. These issues are explored in depth within the following chapter (see section 9.2.3).

'Small is Beautiful'

So far this section has focused upon the 'harder' side of economic regeneration within the District- the highly political, quantifiable, and large scale issues of inward investment and job creation. During the field research, however, there were some, limited, examples of small-scale community-based economic initiatives taking place. These were generally new types of initiatives to the area and part of a package of measures, for instance under the SRB5 programme. Their emergence is inter-linked with the shift in priorities to the 'softer' side of regeneration (see following section for further discussion).

One agency heavily involved in supporting such initiatives is Durham Co-Operative Development Agency (DCDA)[vi]. The agency has been involved in helping a small number of groups around the District establish businesses (for instance an IT Suite at Shotton -see Appendix 11 for details). A development worker can help groups to build up,

> "enterprise awareness skills.....and also help the groups themselves identify forms of funding opportunities, and look at legal structures and support them in terms of the best legal structure to fit their needs, and also to help them realise funding opportunities both now and in the future." (VSO- 33)

As part of the SRB5 programme operating in Dawdon and Parkside, two development officers have been employed. One assists with co-operative business ventures and the other with the establishment of credit unions. There were two businesses in progress when I interviewed the former of these officers: a recording studio and recording rooms; and a the wood recycling business. The officer told me about the recording studio and the people involved who are all;

> "long-term unemployed, so obviously they haven't got the finance to throw out, but its got prospects as a business. Its something that the area hasn't got, its something that could be used by the whole community." (VSPO- 32)

The project addresses issues that are similar to the popular large-scale top down economic regeneration initiatives, such as Enterprise Zones and other inward investment incentives. The project deals with issues of economic stability, job creation, training, capacity building and service provision, but on a small-scale. The quantifiable outputs may be of a smaller magnitude and some may be hard to quantify, such as skills development, confidence building and so on. This can make such projects less attractive in the sense of 'hard' regeneration.

Consequently, there are only a few examples of this type of project in East Durham. There is, nevertheless, *some* activity in this area of regeneration.

In summary, economic regeneration discourses evidently form the core basis for the vast majority of large-scale regeneration activities within East Durham. Notions of trickle-down and the overwhelming desire to attract private investment are pervasive. But the need to demonstrate job creation, and other 'hard' output facts, for political motives, underpins the operation of economic regeneration within East Durham. This economic focus has evolved, and is clearly still evolving, to incorporate discourses such as sustainability, joined- up practices and small-scale initiatives; issues which explored further in Chapters 9 and 10. The point remains, however, that with discourses firmly rooted in a desire to provide firm outputs, there has been little room for the 'softer' discourses of regeneration.

8.2.4 The 'Softer' Side of Regeneration in East Durham

During the field research it became evident that a number of individuals, and groups, recognised that there had been an imbalance to the types of regeneration undertaken in the past. Whilst the issues of physical and economic regeneration had been targeted, with varying degrees of success, some of the underlying social and cultural issues within the District had not been successfully addressed. Issues such as education, health, crime and safety, and the general cultures of dependency and social exclusion remained significant problems in the area.

By far the largest set of regeneration discourses circulating within East Durham *during* the field investigations were those associated with notions of

empowerment and capacity building. Principally, there were three distinctive sets of themes that could be discerned from these discourses. Firstly, the need to empower individuals into the employment market. Secondly, the need to encourage community involvement within regeneration in order to achieve lasting improvements; and related, the third theme, the need to empower local communities to undertake various aspects of regeneration processes. The following chapter will explore the themes of empowering individuals by transforming them into 'beings' able to attain work, within the context of materialisations of nature (see section 9.2.2) and the rhetorical claims for sustainable regeneration (see section 9.2.4). This section will, however, focus upon the third theme: that of 'empowering' community members to take part in, and even manage, regeneration activities. This topic was extremely high on the agenda of most individuals and groups.

'Including the Excluded'

The rationale for encouraging more inclusive systems within regeneration processes tended to centre upon issues of politics, funding, democracy, devolution, and claims of the necessity to involve the socially excluded. In terms of policy and funding, there was a recognition that new directions in European and Central Government need to operationalised at the local level. For instance EU programmes have shifted emphasis and are requiring;

> "a greater focus on community input into the process, to actually emphasise the need to integrate the training and community development aspects of any physical regeneration programme." (PSPO-53)

In addition, the District Council is responding to national policy issues such as Best Value[vii] and Tenants Compacts[viii]; and one executive director emphatically noted that;

> "we're not being dragged kicking and screaming along those lines.....the Government has come up with tenants compacts, its come up with best value, it encourages consultation, and the local council has said "yes its quite right, we ought to be doing that, let's get on and do it", and most of it, we've done it, we've started doing these things ahead of legislation generally." (PSO- 21)

The suggestion being that the Council welcome and, indeed, has already embraced such moves towards greater community involvement within their practices. What, however, has been the basis for such claims to more inclusive processes? An officer for the Council reflected upon this during interview;

> "in my opinion, communities need to be able to take a grasp of some of the issues that are happening in their local area, and have the ability to be able to take some things forward within their community. I'm not saying they'll necessarily have the professional capacity to deal with some of the technical issues and all the rest of it. But there is a lot of opportunities within community regeneration and development that would give opportunity to individuals to help them get involved, to increase skills, and really take things forward." (PSO-44)

This officer echoes the concerns of many participants- that communities should be involved. Initially so that they can better understand the processes, but more importantly, so that they can undertake the regeneration processes for themselves. Underlying this rationale is the implicit suggestion that communities may lack the 'capacity', the requisite skills, needed to take part in regeneration. Also, on a more fundamental level, the suggestion that there needs to be a cultural change before action can take place in the context of community development and regeneration;

> "you've got to regenerate the thinking of the people. They've got to come into it, that they've been indoctrinated into mining. There isn't such a thing anymore. You can't sit there constantly saying "well if the pits were back". You've got to go forward now, so that becomes a part of regeneration as well." (PSPO-51)

Indeed many other officers felt that the coal mining industry had left the area with a 'culture of dependency', which needed to be addressed in order to get people involved in more democratic and devolved activities. Some officers claimed that the mining industry had a strong tradition of employer paternalism and unionised representation. This, they suggested, meant that local people were much less inclined to be involved in traditional public activities. Some community groups also reflected these issues, for instance, during a focus group discussion one community partnership commented upon the benevolence of the mining industry towards its workers, and how this has affected the current situation in the mining villages;

> "M1: The problem is that the collieries didn't do you any good, the colliery or the council looked after you.....We were cocooned in an area where you had work. When I finished school there was no chance that I was going to be unemployed. There was no chance that I wouldn't have a house or a roof over me head. The colliery or the council would have helped us. The store would let us have credit.
> M2: Once he got married the union would have a talk with the colliery and a house would be arranged. When kid number three was on the way you'd go and talk to the union and the foreman and between them they'd arrange for you to move to a bigger house." (Thornley 2 FG-76)

Throughout the evidence there is a general view that many individuals need to undergo some sort of 'transformation'. This transformation is in either attitude and/or skills development. Once 'transformed', the individual (or group) can be enabled to take part in wider regenerative processes around them - this is

explored at length in the following chapter (see section 9.2.2.2). Here, however, the focus turns to the mechanisms via which members of the community are 'empowered' or, conversely, 'dis-empowered' from regeneration processes within the area.

'Empowering the 'Locals''

At first glance the formal structures via which the 'community' are encouraged to participate within regeneration are confusing. Each agency or body working towards regeneration will make certain claims to community consultation and/ or participation. For instance, the cover of the SRB5 Bid in County Durham and Darlington lists a whole raft of groups and agencies involved; in terms of community groups they include: community associations, residents groups, local schools, disability access forums, parent groups, churches and so on. Yet by the end of my time in the field, I was left with the impression that only one type of 'community' group was formally involved within the regeneration of East Durham: the community partnerships. These were established during 1997/98 using Objective 2 Priority 4 funding[ix]. The Council chose 17 target wards[x] (see Table 8.1), with the aid of the Government's Index of Local Deprivation, which would receive priority regeneration aid.

Targeted Wards
Dawdon
Deneside
High Colliery
Acre Rigg
Denehouse
Edenhill
Haswell/ Haswell Plough
Shotton
South Hetton
Thornley
Wheatley Hill
Deaf Hill
Wingate
Blackhall
Horden North & South
Easington Colliery

Table 8.1. Community Economic Development Target Wards for Objective 2 Funding within East Durham.
(Source District Of Easington, 1999a:29)

Each target ward has a community partnership, which has an action plan, and constitution, derived as a result of consultation work carried out using Objective 2 funds. The group composition of each partnership can vary from ward to ward, and can include,

> "representatives of the District Council, elected members, you'll probably get the County Council representative on, you might get a couple of representatives from the parish or the town Council, and then representatives from various sorts of local groups – there might be residents associations, the local business community." (PSO-54)

All 17 target wards have a group, of some format, working towards regeneration. The SRI villages have groups that were established through that specific initiative.

The types of projects undertaken by the community partnerships are set out in the action plans and reflect their local priorities. There would seem to be a focus, across all the groups I encountered, upon providing community facilities, such as resource centres, community centres and so on (see Appendix 11 for examples of such projects). There was also a pre-occupation with youth initiatives, reflecting the priority of having something for the 'youths' of the villages to do, in order to get them off the street corners and reduce the 'perceived' youth problems. These youth initiatives included the employment of youth workers and provision of facilities for youths, often within the aforementioned community facilities.

The regeneration initiatives carried out by the groups are sometimes supported by outside agencies, such as the District or County Councils, East Durham Groundwork Trust, DCDA, and so on. The autonomy of the groups is somewhat debatable. Some officers of the District Council would like them to consider wider issues of regeneration, rather than just their local villages, when applying for funding (in order to meet funding regime criterion);

> "if they're applying for Challenge funding, most Challenge funding cannot be – yes you can put local-based projects in – but because of the nature of some of the projects, things like I've mentioned the shop fronts and training programme – you couldn't possibly put 17 local training programmes in, and what we did was we put in one District-wide training programme, and then we've tried to break it down within the overall bid, and said we'll be working in settlements x, y, and z to actually deliver this programme.....so what we're saying to them is look there is a local dimension, there's your village or ward dimension, but then there's a bigger dimension." (PSO-54)

Throughout the evidence, it appeared that the involvement of partnership groups is sought by the public sector in a distinctly funding orientated manner. The

groups are frequently utilised for information dissemination and gathering (specifically in regard to funding regimes). Officers sometimes spoke of the groups, or representatives from the groups, as 'the community', suggesting that such 'groups' were *representative* of the wider community. For instance, during a meeting of the Dawdon Private Sector Renewal Steering Group[xi], which essentially gathered to discuss housing issues in Dawdon and the probable action of demolishing some former colliery housing (now in the private sector), I was left with an overall feeling of abject fear at the notions of 'community' and 'involvement' (extracts from my fieldnotes can be found in Appendix 12). I felt it was unfair, on the people who lived in those houses, that this was the sort of consultation that seemed appropriate to those present at the meeting. The *only* member of the local community at the meeting was a representative from the community partnership (who was also on the resident's association). Yet this seemed to satisfy the parameters of community involvement and consultation. This was not a one off case as I observed a number of instances of community involvement boiling down to one or two people *representing* entire communities (sometimes of populations in the thousands). Clearly, the issues run far deeper than this limited examination, and it is to these problematic issues of empowerment that attention now turns.

Given that empowerment, capacity building and general bottom-up approaches are supposed to form a basis for most of the regeneration activities taking place in East Durham, particularly at the time of the fieldwork, it was perhaps ironic to discover so many action groups campaigning for their right to be heard and to

have a role within regeneration projects. For instance, two major regeneration initiatives operating within the District, SRB5 and TTT, had sparked considerable controversy within the local communities that they were purporting to 'regenerate'. In both cases, the main points of contention centred around a lack of community involvement at an early stage, but also with an overall (dis)juncture of discourse to the processes of regeneration. These themes which will be highlighted in Chapter 9 and explored at depth in Chapter 10 .

8.3 Summarising the Main Constructions of Regeneration within East Durham

Throughout this, and the previous, chapter a number of common themes surrounding the practices of regeneration within East Durham have emerged. Through an examination of the main components and key players within regeneration it has been evident that there are several key themes. These include the general issue that there is an overwhelming variety of regeneration interpretations in operation, the most common of which centre around notions of holistic approaches versus small scale more piecemeal; notions of rebirth and reinvention of the area; notions of transforming local people; and issues of equity. All of these interpretations are framed by a distinct set of political, economic, social, cultural, geographical and periodic structures. This section briefly explores the most common notions of regeneration, whilst commenting upon the issue of variety and concludes with comments upon the structures that frame regeneration within the district.

"Variety is the Spice of Life?"

It is clear that regeneration activities within East Durham are being conducted on a broad spectrum within far reaching networks of actants. There will invariably be a variety of interpretations of regeneration, and it is extremely important to consider this when discussing the actions of certain actants. For instance, a voluntary sector officer noted that,

> "You have to ask yourself what is the agenda when you go into a meeting. When they talk about regeneration, regeneration for whom...and what's their agenda, and I often sit around a group of people or at a meeting, and there are several agendas, and you think you are there under the banner of community regeneration, and you're not. You're under the banner of the County, or the District meeting certain economic targets, and they do not necessarily match the community's. They all think that they are doing the same thing but they're not, they're a million miles apart." (VSO-22)

It is essential to consider *who's regeneration* is being interpreted as the main construction. With so many key players in the field of regeneration, there will be powerful negotiations over the definition and thrust of regeneration activity.

The examination of the components of regeneration (section 6.2) revealed that a number of themes within the regeneration of East Durham have remained as stalwarts, such as the need for job creation, whilst others have waxed and waned in popularity, such as the more social aspects of regeneration, like capacity building. Whilst the main interpretations of regeneration may have been shifting at the time of the fieldwork, it was clear that there still existed the need for this activity called 'regeneration', and people were still working towards this goal. The aim here is to assess the main interpretations of regeneration in East Durham,

before providing comment upon the factors which have structured such interpretations.

'Rebirth'

Perhaps the most abiding image, used to describe regeneration, was that of,

"the phoenix rising from the ashes." (EDBC: 11)

During interviews and focus groups I steered conversations to enable individuals to provide their interpretations of regeneration. One interviewee suggested this metaphor of a phoenix rising from the ashes. The phoenix is a mythological creature, a firebird, that, according to stories, dies in a fire and is resurrected (regenerated) from the ashes. The phoenix was adopted by early Christians as a symbol of Christ's Resurrection, and is associated with the symbolism of hope, the possibility for the better, the triumph of will over circumstance and continuity over generations (Dyson, 2001). The same interviewee further suggested that,

> "Regeneration is about the need for communities to focus the community spirit which has always been very high in this district on helping..... things hit an all time low when you have a disaster like you had in the early 90s. There are your ashes. Regeneration is about the need for people to pull themselves above that. Regeneration is not only commercial, it's social, it's economic, and about everything that happens around you." (*op cit*)

Symbolically, the ashes were created by the decline of the coal mining industry and the rise from these ashes is fuelled by the community spirit, the hope of the local people. Indeed this is the main construction of regeneration circulating within East Durham, across the wide spectrum of the key players working within the arena (see Table 7.1). There was no engagement with the possibility that the area should be left to decline and achieve an organic re-balance. Intervention in

order to bring about regeneration was seen as essential. When the focus groups were asked what they thought regeneration was, they commonly suggested that it was about a rebirth for the settlements; finding a new role; retrieving community spirit; and providing jobs to enable people to live in the area;

> "F2: Making it a better place to live" (Thornley1 FG)

> "M1: your regeneration is to get rid of the old houses....and attract new" (Thornley2 FG)

> "F5: Its developing a sense of community again" (Trimdon FG)

> "M1: its bringing back the employment again" (Dawdon FG)

> "M2: I would completely regenerate the Council" (PRA FG)

> "F2: I'd like to see the togetherness back in the place, like there used to be" (Easington SRI FG)

> "M3: First, bringing the community together" (TTT FG)

> "M3: I think its the **rebirth** of this area- since they closed the collieries- **not regeneration**" (DFAG FG)

> "M2: its putting the village back where it was" (Blackhall SRI FG)

> "F3: Getting the village to be like a village as a whole again, where people can walk around and talk to other people" (Shotton FG)

'The Big Picture'

There are components to regeneration, as illustrated in section 6.2. However, these elements may have various weightings. Many players spoke of the need for holistic approaches to regeneration. The District Council have what they call a 'Big Picture' for regeneration, which forms an overall strategy and contains;

> "elements that contribute to regeneration, economic, social and environmental." (PSO:13)

There was widespread recognition that these components to regeneration existed and that some were more of a priority, commonly the economic aspects. Often certain regeneration initiatives were viewed as jigsaw pieces in part of a wider puzzle for regeneration. For instance, during the Dalton Flatts inquiry it was suggested that the proposed development could be a piece of the jigsaw that fed into the regeneration of the area. There were, however, far too many pieces of the jigsaw puzzle operating, sometimes, quite autonomously or without fitting into the overall strategy particularly well. Some regeneration initiatives did not fit into the puzzle but were 'squeezed' into it.

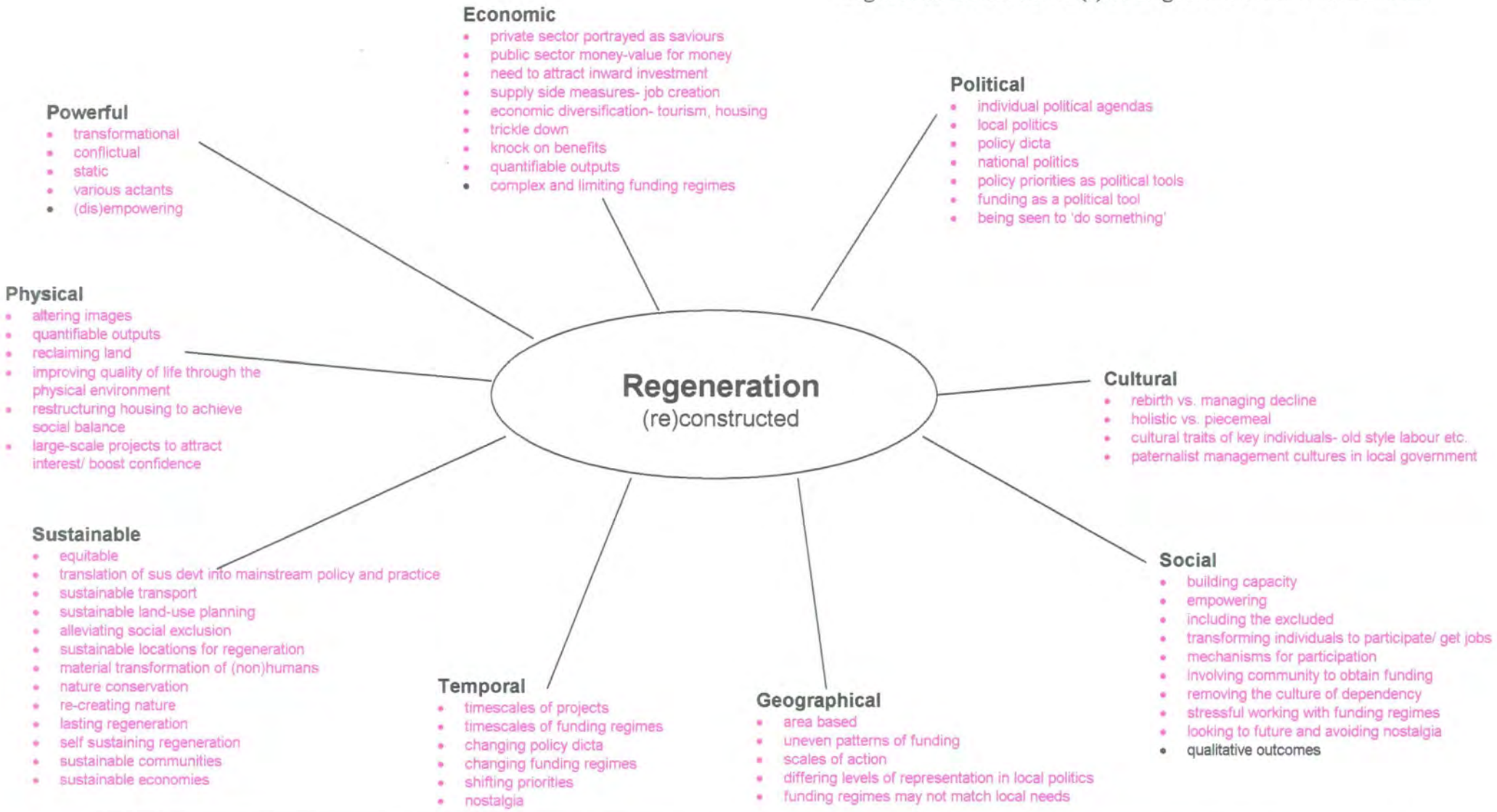
Economic and Political Drivers

Throughout the research process it became evident that regeneration constructions, within East Durham, were highly constrained by a number of factors, as illustrated in Figure 8.1. Clearly these elements are inter-linked but it is possible to identify how each can have an impact upon regeneration practices. The greatest constraining structures are those of economics and politics. This chapter has highlighted the problematics associated with certain components of regeneration, which generally centre around issues of politics and economics. For instance, the key theme of empowerment has proved difficult to put into practice. A number of the community groups feel disaffected by the regeneration processes taking place around them, often claiming they are not included and often not even informed of the work. Officers have suggested that this is due to the funding regimes which place constraints upon the work that they do. For instance, a voluntary sector officer suggested that,

> "we've rushed head-long into communities with pre-designed and pre-conceived programmes and ideas of how we should go about doing it, and really we should start at a much lower level .....I've been amazed at the amount of money that is sloshing around in County Durham is staggering, and the amount of money that I think is wasted in County Durham, is not achieving what it sets out to achieve because the money doesn't fit the needs.....the funding that's coming down doesn't match how you go about community regeneration because its all driven by outcomes and outputs, and jobs, and training places." (VSO-22)

Due to the highly prescriptive nature of funding regimes, which themselves are political tools, regeneration initiatives conducted are often not the right ones for the area. Groups are finding that they can set their own priorities and objectives but often they do not fit into the funding criteria. In some cases this may be due to geography. Some funding regimes have set geographical boundaries, such as EU structural funds, and as such can lead to issues of inequity and a *geography of regeneration*. In the case of East Durham, there has been a significant focus upon the coastal settlements and less on the former pit villages to the west of the district, primarily due to funding and political issues. In other cases projects that key players wish to tackle, in the name of regeneration, simply do not fit within any current funding criteria and are 'altered' to 'fit'. This can lead to compromised objectives for the project. In particular, the focus of funding regimes upon quantifiable outputs has meant that the softer issues of regeneration have often been neglected.

Figure 8.1 Construction(s) of Regeneration in East Durham



The irony of alienating the very people the initiatives aim to include (empower) was not lost on me. My field notes contain numerous comments upon the problematics of regeneration, such as the innately uneven, inequitability of regeneration initiatives, due to funding regulations or priorities. Regeneration is very much politically and economically driven, especially when one examines policy dicta and funding regimes. These issues are further analysed in the following chapter, which examines how the ideals of sustainability and sustainable development have been operationalised within the regeneration processes in East Durham. Chapter 10 draws together the interpretations of the empirical evidence, from Chapters 7, 8 and 9, to provide comment upon the main issues that have been highlighted.

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[i] Further research of these themes, and planned outputs from the thesis include: (in preparation) for Area- *"What have you done for us?": The pain and pleasure of ethnographic fieldwork*; The Journal of Environmental Planning & Management- *Constructions of Sustainability: the case of Dalton Flatts, Co. Durham, Planning Inquiry*; Environment & Planning D: Society & Space- "*Constructions of Nature and the Regeneration of the East Durham Coalfield*"; and for Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers-"*It'll never be a Blackpool": The 'Sustainable' 'Regeneration' of the East Durham Coalfield Coastal Area.*"

[ii] I talked to groups via the focus group interview format and whilst attending official group meetings as an observer.

[iii] The presentations were for visitors to the District from Poland, in November 1999, and for a public meeting about progress on the Dalton Flatts development held at the Victoria Club, Murton in March 2000.

[iv] Modus Properties Ltd.

[v] The Private Developers Matthew Fox Ltd suggested on numerous occasions that they would ensure that local people got the jobs created on the Dalton Flatts site. For instance, during the Public Meeting *OP.CIT* one of the developers took questions from the audience about the types of jobs that would be available for local people, and he suggested that he would ensure the employers on the site would provide posts for the people of Murton. Also during interview the developers suggested that they were modern day philanthropists and would be putting training facilities on the site to ensure that local people could receive the correct training in order to access the posts available!

[vi] A co-operative development is "a business, with commercial as well as social objectives, and they're owned and controlled by the employees who work within them as a worker co-operative. Profits are actually kept within the locality if you like, they're not taken out to shareholders or somewhere else." (Voluntary Sector Officer- 33).

[vii] Best Value is a Government initiative, introduced in April 2000, that means councils must

review all their services for local people (in consultation with the wider community and the people who use their services) and improve them via the best means available (DETR, 1999b).

[viii] Tenant Compacts are a means of enabling local councils to review their services in housing. Compacts are agreements between local councils and their tenants that set out how tenants can be involved in local decisions on housing matters; what councils and tenants want to achieve through their compact; and how the compact will be implemented and checked (DETR, 1999c).

[ix] Objective 2 is outlined in section 5.5.2.1. Priority 4 refers to community economic development.

[x] The District Council also call these 'Community Economic Development' wards.

[xi] Meeting of the Dawdon Private Sector Renewal Steering Group, at Dawdon Welfare Hall, April 2000.

9.1 Introduction

The terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are popular within many policy discourses and, not least, those that address regeneration. Indeed, sustainability is a constituent element of 'regeneration' (see section 5.4.2.4), that operates alongside, and within, a set of other components, such as physical, economic and social regeneration (see Figure 8.1). Many claims are made in the name of sustainable development and sustainability in the context of regeneration policy and practice. 'Sustainability', however, is also a major policy directive in its own right, with many sections of government policy attempting to address this global concern (Blowers, 1993). Within Chapter 4 it was suggested that the greatest challenge for sustainability lies with ensuring the translation of the concept into mainstream attitudes, practices, policy and, more generally, society.

The aims of this chapter are twofold; firstly, there is a need to examine how the ideals of sustainability and sustainable development have been operationalised within the regeneration processes in East Durham. This is done using a similar format to the previous chapter whereby common themes, which have emerged from a close analysis of the collated evidence, provide detailed illustrations of the main constructions of sustainability within regeneration discourse and practice in East Durham. The focus is upon analysing these constructions and the mechanisms via which they are enabled to operate. There is critical engagement with the ways in which the various interest groups involved in the regeneration of coalfield communities, and specifically East Durham, understand and utilise discourse of sustainability. Secondly, the main patterns of sustainability

operating in East Durham are critically explored, before the subsequent chapter widens out discussion and analysis to broader fields. This aids in the addressing of the following thesis questions (see Chapter 1),

3. What are the concepts of sustainability? How are they interpreted into regeneration discourse and policy?
4. How is sustainability understood within the interest groups involved in the regeneration of coalfield communities?
5. What are the implications of this understanding?

9.2. The Operation of Sustainability within East Durham

In an ideal world sustainability and sustainable development would operate at all levels of policy and practice. The rhetorical claims of the concepts would be incorporated within all regeneration works taking place within East Durham, from planning to policy and right down to projects on the ground. This chapter, however, illustrates that these concepts operated far from this utopian ideal. Indeed, in some cases the concepts are 'missing-in-action'. At times it is hard to find traces of sustainability where one would anticipate the concept appearing- this is highlighted below in section 9.2.5. Conversely, there are instances where much is made of the concept in order to ground certain actions over others. These instances are drawn out in the following sections, which represent the five key constructions of sustainability operating within East Durham's regeneration performances and practices. The first set of sustainability constructions to be explored are those drawn upon in claims towards transport and regeneration initiatives. The second and third set of constructions, materialisations of nature and nature conservation, are interwoven but are separated out in an exploration of

how differing claims for nature can be used alongside sustainability and regeneration discourses to produce distinct winners and losers in the game of regeneration. The metaphorical quest for the holy grail of sustainable regeneration is explored in the fourth construction of sustainability. Whilst the final section focuses upon the limited ways in which the concept is used throughout the evidence, the lack of utopian ideal for sustainability in East Durham's regeneration means that this last section resonates throughout all the constructions of sustainability.

9.2.1 Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Initiatives

This section considers issues surrounding the utilisation of sustainability within the context of transport and regeneration processes. Throughout the analysis, and gathering, of the evidence it became apparent that the most popular set of sustainability discourses were associated with transport; specifically related to land-use planning and regeneration practices. The aims of the White Paper and guidance within Planning Policy (as outlined in section 4.5) provide the framework within which to situate the following discussion of the sustainable transport issues that emerged in East Durham during this study. Three key issues emerged. Firstly, an overall concern with the lack of public transport provision, and the issues of equity that accompany such poor provision came to the front. Secondly, the most widely used discourse of sustainability, throughout the entire research process, emerged from the Dalton Flatts case. Here, there were considerable claims to sustainability/ un-sustainability in terms of transport. Whilst, thirdly, within the case of TTT some strong elements of action towards

sustainable transport are thwarted by economic and political frameworks. Each of these topics will be explored in detail within this section.

9.2.1.1 Sustainability, Social Exclusion and Transport in the District

The District of Easington has been described, by many, throughout the evidence, as having a poor overall pattern of public transport provision. In a District with low levels of car ownership, 47% of households have no car compared with the national average of 34%[i], this raises a number of issues with regards to sustainability. The lack of access to adequate public transport, and basic amenities and services within the District, are major factors in the processes of social exclusion, and to perpetuating an increased reliance upon the car (where households have access to one); for instance,

> "its often the case that people are having to travel much greater distances to access basic services than they would perhaps elsewhere, and by and large they're having to use private transport to do it because public transport is simply inadequate." (PSO: 24)

Issues of sustainability and social exclusion emergent from the evidence are analysed within this section. The subsequent sections provide an in-depth focus upon the two units of analysis, Dalton Flatts and TTT, within which transport issues played an important role in the circulation of sustainability discourses.

The District Council provides a very clear link between transport, regeneration and sustainability within its Deposit Local Plan,

> "An effective transport system is vital to the economic and social regeneration of the District but continuing growth in road transport and consequent environmental impacts present a major challenge to the objective of sustainable development." (District of Easington, 1998a:91)

Improved transport systems and appropriate land use planning clearly have a role to play in regeneration, not least in terms of helping to alleviate problems associated with social exclusion. Many residents in the District have problems accessing employment locations, educational establishments, and general amenities. These themes were an issue throughout all the focus group interviews. In Shotton, for instance, a participant noted,

> "M1: We've got nothing in the village for the young ones to do. If they want indoor sports [facilities] they've got to go down to Peterlee- it costs you the bus fare." (Shotton FG:82)

The dominant view in these interviews was of high bus fares and poor service provision. The following exchange, during the latter part of the same interview, is indicative of views expressed in other groups;

> "F2: I used to always use buses, but then they got less and less regular.
> M1: The price of buses as well.
> F2: Its cheaper to get a taxi than it was to get a bus. If there's a few of you.....
> M1: A family on the bus.... Its a lot of money out of your benefits." (Shotton FG:82)

Another common theme was that of transport services to new sites of employment, such as the Enterprise Zones,

> "M1: We've been fighting to get a buses onto parts of Peterlee because we've got kids going and getting jobs in the Bracken Hill area but they **can't get to the jobs**..." (Thornley FG2:76)

Indeed, numerous groups spoke of the incongruity of providing jobs but not the public transport infrastructure to access them. A number of groups spoke of having to get taxis to work, and how this had a significant impact upon wages

and the cost effectiveness of actually being employed. One public sector officer candidly commented that,

> "Taxis proliferate in the area, cheap taxis as well because of the economic [situation] so that tends to prevent or excuse local authorities and public transport providers from improving their services." (PSO:24)

Yet during my time in the field, observing various group meetings across the District, I encountered efforts to address rural transport issues. For instance, at a meeting of the Blackhall SRI Steering Group a rural transport officer for the County Council introduced a new initiative from the Countryside Agency– Rural Transport Partnerships (RTP's) whose aims were,

> "to enable all those in the rural areas of County Durham to gain access to jobs, shopping, leisure, training, health and education. (Durham County Council 2003[ii])

The officer explained how this might work for somewhere like Blackhall, such that funding could be obtained to deal with issues such as 'needs for travel to work', with particular reference to call centres, due to their location and shift work patterns; problems of people getting to the doctor's surgery; proposed uses of volunteer drivers or a taxi-mini-bus service; and possible bus shelter improvements (glass, clean, information available, dropped curbs and so on). Thus the emphasis was not just upon public transport, but also included community transport, voluntary car schemes, walking and cycling.

In summary, poor public transport, inappropriate siting of new developments, limited access to basic amenities and jobs and low levels of car ownership are all factors which have contributed to increased social exclusion and the poor

operation of the principles of sustainability within East Durham. These issues are further highlighted by a close examination of Dalton Flatts and TTT.

9.2.1.2. Sustainable Transport and Dalton Flatts

The contextual background to the case of the out of town retail-leisure development at Dalton Flatts, near Murton (see Figure 3.4), is provided in section 6.5.2. Throughout the application process, and subsequent public inquiry, there was considerable emphasis upon various discourses of sustainability. In terms of transport, in particular, the main parties involved made claims that evolved around a set of binary opposites- sustainable versus un-sustainable consequences of the development. These binary claims, and the key actors using them, are illustrated in Figure 9.1. The claims essentially reflect Government policy with regards to sustainable development and transport: the need to reduce vehicle mileage; encourage modes of transport other than the car; and provide better access to public transport for all (as outlined above). In light of this policy it is claimed that the development will be either sustainable or un-sustainable. In addition, sets of local debates are drawn into the discursive exchanges, within the context of the public inquiry and associated documents[iii]. These too, however, are framed by the same set of binary opposites. The following sections explore the binary claims and their rhetorical stances in detail.

The greatest claim for sustainability within the case of Dalton Flatts is made in the context of vehicle mileage and journey savings, or, conversely, increases. Proponents for the development claimed that the location of the development on

Dalton Flatts would lead to fewer journeys out of the District. The developers employed a consultancy to undertake a Transport Impact Assessment (hereafter referred to as TIA), which calculated that the development, situated on Dalton Flatts, would result in a net reduction of 12.42 million miles per year (Ove Arup & Partners, 1998:15). There were numerous reasons given for this reduction; for instance the District Council claimed, in its submission document, that;

> "in terms of simple logic a significant amount of trips by private car are being made because attractive retail and leisure facilities just do not exist in this District." (District of Easington, 1999c:24)

The District Council provide an example of a resident from Peterlee wanting to visit a cinema, and suggest that without the development the resident would need to make a round trip of between 27 and 40 miles, yet with the development this would drop to 11 miles. In the conclusions to the Districts' submission there are direct claims to sustainable transport practices as a result of the development;

> "in terms of sustainability the District Council submit that, logically, the proposals will have the effect of reducing the length of motorised journeys and thus reduce the use of the private car." (*op cit*:33)

Other reasons for journey/ mileage savings revolved around a similar context. During the inquiry, for instance, one of the witnesses[iv] for the developers suggested that the location of the development was 'sustainable' in that it would provide employment within the proximity of a settlement, thus employees could use 'sustainable' modes of transport, with a significant population, many of who were unemployed.

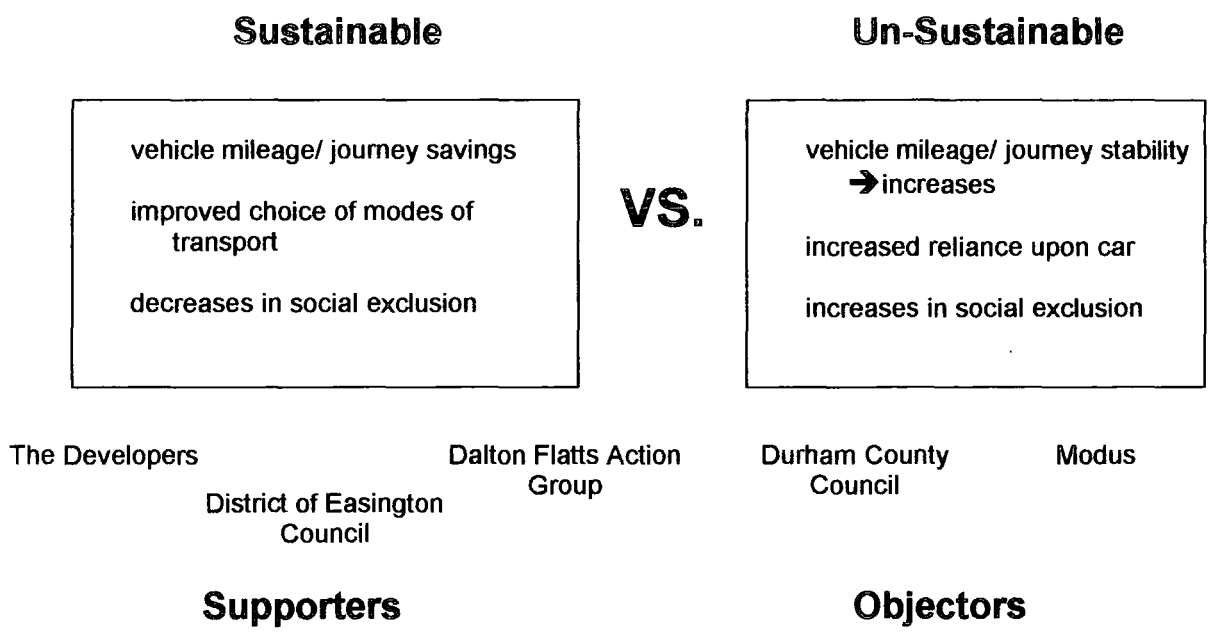

Figure 9.1 Constructions of Sustainability and Transport used within the case of Dalton Flatts

On the other side of the debate, the opponents of the development suggested that Dalton Flatts represented an un-sustainable location with regards to transport. Opponents drew heavily upon PPG6 and PPG13 to illustrate that town centres are considered to be the most sustainable location, in terms of transport. Durham County Council's submission document, for instance, used the guidance notes by directing the inspector to specific sections;

> "PPG13, paragraph 3.10 states that travel for shopping has grown strongly, particularly in the non-food sector. In local plans, local authorities should: '...avoid sporadic siting of comparison goods shopping units out of centres or along road corridors.' The same message is reinforced in PPG6... 'Town centres are, and should remain the focus that generate a large number of trips. They typically act as the hub of public transport networks'." (Durham County Council, 1999a:24)

The crux of the argument being that town centres are better locations for such developments because they have better access and are, thus, more 'sustainable' than a location at Murton;

> "Locating the facilities in Seaham or Peterlee town centres would equally result in any possible saving of journeys outside the District and would offer better opportunities to reduce vehicle mileage. These are the most sustainable locations for such a development in the District." (Durham County Council, 1999b:2)

The inspector of the public inquiry, in his report, accepts that a site in these towns would be much more accessible by foot (The Planning Inspectorate, 1999:44). The inspector also suggests that the estimates of vehicle mileage savings were unrealistic, due to the possibility of latent demand;

> "since the application site is in an area remote from existing multiplex cinemas and factory outlet centres....there will be many people in the area who do not at present visit such places at all, but who would do so if the journey were shorter." (*Op cit*:38)

Therefore, the inspector suggests, there would be additional journeys. In addition to this issue, the report also questions the prospect of choice in regards to modes of transport, a theme linked with the above discussion but which drew upon alternative discourses of sustainability, and to which this section now turns its focus.

Supporters of Dalton Flatts claimed that the development would be accessible via a choice of modes of transport; such as bus, car, bicycle and foot. Indeed the conclusions to the TIA claim that;

> "The development will lead to a reduction in....car trips....which will reduce environmental pollution. The development will therefore fully comply with national and local sustainable policies by limiting car

> use, improving public transport services and encouraging the use of other sustainable modes of transport." (Ove Arup & Partners, 1998:16)

This claim illustrates a number of sustainability discourses, discussed below. Firstly, the claimant suggests sustainability as a direct consequence of fewer car trips, an environmental bonus. As Figure 9.1 suggests, however, the opponents challenged the notion of reduced car usage, for instance, the consultant for Modus suggested, in interview, that;

> "with this location being so close to the A19 there's no getting away from the fact that the main mode of transport is always likely to be by private car." (Cons: 15)

During the inquiry much was made of the ability to restrict visitors using cars to travel to the development. The author of the TIA suggests that by limiting car parking spaces car use will be reduced (Ove Arup & Partners, 1998). Opponents, however, spent a considerable amount of inquiry time debating the numbers of parking spaces and the effectiveness of this mechanism for reducing car use. The inspector noted that research has shown that 90-95% of customers visiting out of town centres travel by car, compared to an figure of 51% for travel to town centres (The Planning Inspectorate, 1999). It was, however, noted during the inquiry, and throughout subsequent interviews, that one should consider the context of East Durham as a whole;

> "You have to look at the backdrop.....very low levels of car ownership and very poor levels of public transport, particularly in rural areas." (PSO 13)

Given these low levels of car ownership, and the nature of rurality it was suggested that fewer people would travel to the site by car. The inspector

accepted this point but noted that car ownership would probably grow, in due course, to fall in line with the Durham average, such that the claim for low car ownership would no longer have pertinence (The Planning Inspectorate, 1999). Indeed, the inspector reiterates the point that less people live within walking distance of the site compared to the town centres of Peterlee and Seaham[v]. He further questions the maintenance of bus routes after the initial three years of the commencement of the development; which strongly calls into question the second claim to which the TIA made: improved public transport.

Secondly, then, there is the claim, within the TIA, that sustainability will be achieved as a consequence of improved public transport. This debate was strongly framed by the discourses of social exclusion. For instance, during an interview with an officer for the County Council we discussed the issue of sustainability and land use planning, in the context of Dalton Flatts, and he noted that;

> "a development of this nature out near somewhere like Dalton Flatts, away from the town centres, then you would actually exclude quite a large proportion of the population, particularly the more deprived, who don't have access to cars.... the social inclusive location for these developments is in town centres." (PSO 10)

Conversely, an officer for the District Council felt that the development offered hope of improvements in the area of social exclusion,

> "people are travelling out, if you've got a car.....As part of the proposal there's a green transport plan which might help to actual improve services within the district as well, not significantly but we would still see some improvements. So it would give people the opportunity in our district who might not be able to travel out to be

> able to go to, and have choice.....we felt, on that, basis it was a sustainable sort of development." (PSO, 12)

Indeed the Green Transport Plan, as outlined in the TIA, offered, for example, financial support and promotion of improved bus services; a bus only link through the site; new bus stop facilities; cycle paths and pedestrian facilities, in support of a move away from cars to "more sustainable modes of transport" (Ove Arup & Partners, 1998:11).

Whilst there were claims for improvements in the field of social exclusion, via improved public transport, there were also calls for inter-generational equity. During a focus group interview, with the action group campaigning for the development, one participant asked,

> "M3: Why should we have to travel up to 20 miles in either direction to get the facilities which we are asking for?" (DFAG FG:74)

Whilst another participant added,

> "M2:....what's the difference between us travelling out of the district and people coming into the district?"(*Op cit*)

Other focus group interviews reflected similar views[vi]. Some individuals, however, suggested that they would not be able to get to the site and that the development might undermine public transport that already exists; for instance, a participant in Thornley commented,

> "M1: I can see the scenario with Dalton Flatts that it could kill Peterlee.....that makes us worse off because we can get a bus straight to Peterlee. We....can't get to Dalton Flatts. That's how ridiculous it is." (Thornley2 FG:76)

This research participant draws attention to another aspect of the constructions of sustainability utilised within the inquiry - that of sustaining and enhancing town

centres, and impacts out of town developments have on town centres, which is reflected in PPG6. These constructions draw heavily upon the adjectival uses of the terms sustainable, as discussed below, see section 9.2.4.

Since the opening of Phase One of the development on April 10th 2003 there have been a considerable number of visitors,

> "Customers are coming from quite some distance....Blackpool, Yorkshire and Northumberland." (David Gosling, Dalton Park Centre Manager, as cited in Crosby, 2003: The Sunderland Echo)

Indeed, traffic to and from the site is very heavy. The owners[vii] of the new development suggest to prospective clients, via their website, that a catchment population of 2.6 million exists within a 60 minute (road) corridor of the site (see Figure 9.2). Since opening, the slip road from the A19 (see Figure 9.3) often has traffic queuing back onto the A19; this has prompted the police to place a warning sign on the A19 for motorists to beware queuing traffic. The car park has spaces for 1200 vehicles, and this is often well utilised on a weekend - on the opening day cars overflowed to parking along the entrance roads.

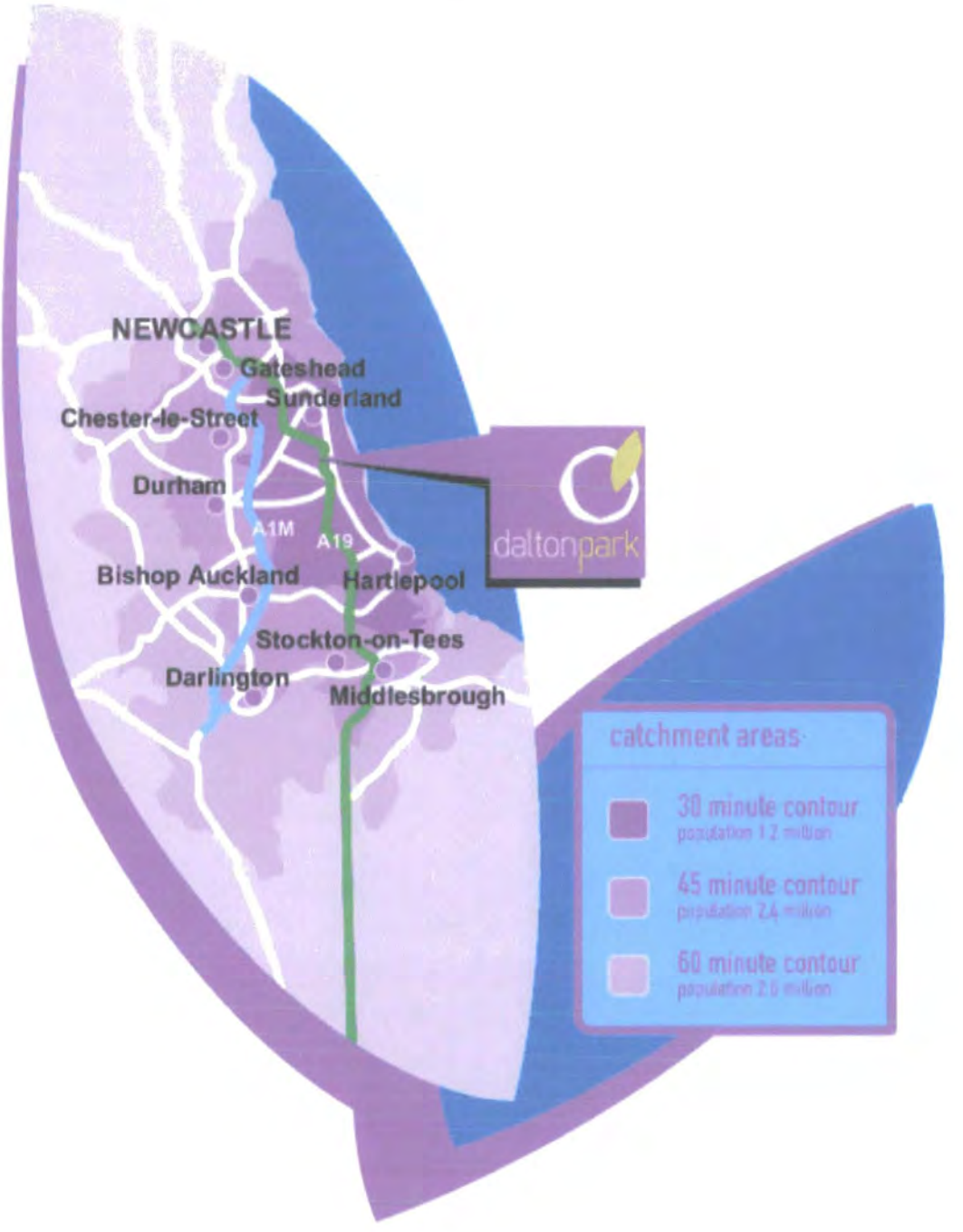

Figure 9.2. Suggested Catchment areas for Dalton Park. Source: http:www.dalton-park.co.uk/leasing.html (accessed March 2003)

My recent observations of the site have been that people are using a mix of modes of transport. The car, however, is the most popular. Buses have been

diverted into the centre, and on the opening weekend complimentary shuttle buses were provided from the centre of Murton (see Figure 9.3). Access to the site by foot is not as easy as one might expect. The landscaping scheme tends to prevent pedestrians from entering the centre (see Plate 9.1). Walking from my house, on the eastern side of the A19, meant that I had to cross a number of busy roads and found access to the centre very difficult (see Plate 9.2). Thus far, I have seen no cyclists entering the site!

Figure 9.3. Location of Dalton Park, in proximity to Murton . Source: http://www.dalton-park.co.uk/location.html (accessed March, 2003)

The case of Dalton Flatts is particularly interesting in light of numerous claims made for the development with regards to sustainability and regeneration. Many of these claims are outlined elsewhere in this chapter (see below), however, the focus of this section has been upon the ways in which discourses of sustainability were drawn upon to make claims towards transport. This section has highlighted

some of the structures and discourses that legitimised a set of fairly narrow issues with regards to sustainability and transport. Sets of binary claims were made by the main parties involved, which essentially revolved around interpretations of PPGs 13 and 6. Cases were made for journey savings and countered with cases for journey increases, and so on. In the end the Secretary of State, in over-turning the Inspectors decision to deny planning permission, noted that,

> "The proposal will produce a saving in vehicle mileage travelled, consistent with PPG13. Any disbenefits of the proposal, such as....its relative lack of accessibility by means other than the car, are substantially outweighed by the advantages." (GONE, 2000:para 26)

The final outcome of the inquiry reflected a pragmatic view, at the end of the day there were much wider issues. The political and economic aspects that construct, and distort, regeneration and sustainability discourses are discussed in the following chapter.

9.2.1.3 Sustainable Transport and Turning the Tide

In the case of the TTT project transport and access to the coast were framed, from the outset, by claims for sustainability. In Chapter 6 the contextual background to and brief descriptions of the project were provided (see section 6.5.4). It was noted that the threefold philosophy, underpinning the project, made claims to encourage sustainable use and enjoyment of the Durham coast. A key task for TTT was;

Plate 9.1 Access to Dalton Park

Plate 9.2 Access to Dalton Park

> "To undertake a major integrated programme to provide access to and the enjoyment of the coast." (EDTF,1995:17)

The original bidding document contained a large section addressing a recreation and access strategy that would, in essence, be sustainable;

> "Encouraging increasing use and enjoyment of the coast for informal recreation must be coupled with measures to ensure environmental sustainability." (*op cit*:29)

The document outlined a strategy that sought to maximise recreation along the coast whilst also ensuring conservation of this "nationally important natural resource" (*op cit*). The ethos here is to encourage access for all but in a sustainable manner. The original bidding document considered the projected visitor numbers[viii] to be sustainable given effective management (EDTF,1995). The document noted that,

> "where visitors go and what they do could have a considerable impact on the environmental resource." (*op cit*:29)

In an attempt to 'manage' this flow of visitors to and along the coast the bidding document proposed a sustainable transport strategy[ix], passionately stating that,

> "Providing for informal recreation, which focuses on enjoyment of the natural environment, without attempting to safeguard that environment through the adoption of sustainable transport options is clearly irresponsible and hypocritical." (*op cit*:30)

The proposal considered the coast railway line to be fundamental to the management of visitors. The rail line was uniquely placed, it was claimed, to serve various sites of interest (see Figure 6.3). It was envisaged that bus travel would play a limited part as the road network is physically separated from the coast by the rail line. In addition to which the document clearly highlights the inter-generational aspect of transport provision,

> "Providing for access to the coast by carbourne [sic] visitors alone would be a shortsighted, unsustainable option which effectively discriminates against the 44% of the local population who do not own a car." (*op cit*)

The plan was to open up six new rail halts (see Figure 6.3) that would act as *Green Gateways*, from which people could embark on walks and so on. Some *Gateways* were described as *Deep Green*, with no private car access to them. The use of the terms green and deep green has particular overtones of green radicalism, as outlined in Chapter 4. The Millennium Commission, however, would not fund the rail halts. During interviews it was suggested that the main reason for this was the political economic climate,

> "The Government ..... was the Conservative Government, who felt that would be an unfair advantage to one train operator, that we were going to provide the infrastructure for his business." (QPO 56)

There are, however, still efforts to get at least one new rail halt opened (either at Horden or Easington), using the potential of travel to work from the new halt as an extra selling point to rail operators. Indeed one interviewee noted that the District Council had taken this opportunity to consider sustainable transport routes to work. The fact remained, however, that the main source of access to the coast for visitors was likely to be the car. The project maintained efforts to shift to "more sustainable forms of transport" via its 1998 Access Strategy, which outlined a "co-ordinated approach to the rationalisation" of the transport and access network (TTT Steering Group, 1998:3,7). The specific modes of transport addressed included walking, cycling, private cars, horse riding and public transport, all in line with "the Sustainability ethos of the programme" (*op cit*:9).

9.2.2 Materialisations of Nature

From the evidence and observations gathered it is possible to highlight the ways in which constructions of nature (and human beings) are being materially transformed as 'resources', framed by sustainability and sustainable development discourses, to form the basis of some regeneration activities within the area. In order to explore, these two key themes that run throughout the evidence will be used: land reclamation and empowerment. There are many other themes emergent from the evidence, yet these two best illustrate the ways in which nature is being materially and semiotically transformed. The themes of 'sustainable' resource management are further engaged in the following section, which addresses discourses of conserving nature and the practices of regeneration; clearly, these topics are inter-linked but have been separated out to aid discussion.

9.2.2.1 Land Reclamation

Land reclamation has formed a major part of the regeneration processes in East Durham (see section 8.2.2). The land is 'reclaimed' such that it is brought back into productive use, essentially for free market uses such as industrial, housing, leisure or retail developments, but also sometimes for nature conservation. For instance the District's Deposit Local Plan noted that,

> "The reclamation of derelict land is...an important element of sustainable development in that it ensures that land, which is a non-renewable resources, is re-used. This can be beneficial in assisting the regeneration of the District and reducing pressure for development in the countryside." (District of Easington, 1998a:42)

The claims made over land reclamation, and its subsequent re-use, are framed by wider structures and networks of legitimacy, such as land use planning policy or Government guidance on sustainable development. Some actors are able to use these discourses to legitimise actions that are essentially un-sustainable in nature. To explore these issues, this section focuses upon claims made about regeneration that draw upon material transformations of nature, specifically in terms of brown and green land uses.

'Brown is better than Green?'

The previous chapter outlined the District's early pre-occupation with land-reclamation as a component of regeneration. The slides in Appendix 10 illustrate that over £1001 million has been spent 'reclaiming' land. This reclamation has been mainly of the former colliery sites and contaminated land. The rhetorical claims for this physical regeneration, in a largely economic sense, were examined in Chapter 8. Here the aim is to comment upon emerging discourses of sustainable development that have come to frame actions taken in the transformation and subsequent re-use of land.

The rhetorical claim that 'brownfield is better than greenfield' for new developments has become a stalwart of the UK's planning system. This is rooted in claims that the re-use of land is essential to the operation of sustainable development within the planning system. Indeed, part of the ethos for including land in green belts is to,

> "assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict land and other urban land." (DOE, 1995:2)

Yet in a review of issues in the coalfields, the Coalfield Taskforce Report (1998) suggested that some relaxation of planning policy in this area was required. The report noted that strategic employment sites were urgently needed in coalfield areas yet such sites had encountered some policies (namely PPG7: Countryside and PPG2: Green Belts) as obstacles to development. The report argued that the pits had generally been sunk on "virgin agricultural land" with most of the work being undertaken underground (*op cit*: 21). Now, however, in order to achieve "sustainable regeneration" space must be found above ground for employment developments. As a result of this historical legacy, and unique circumstances, the report called for a more "pragmatic approach to planning" (*op cit*), noting that,

> "In accordance with the principles of sustainable development, we advocate that the new approach should explicitly recognise that the release of carefully selected sites for employment development can be balanced throughout the coalfield areas as a whole by creation of new green land and the promotion of biodiversity" (*op cit*)

The implicit suggestion here is that land can be reclaimed/ re-made for a number of purposes, and that whilst the principles of sustainable development are important they should not be obstacles to economic growth. Trade-offs are available, in the reclamation of land for habitat creation for instance (explored in section 9.2.3). Indeed the issues raised by the Coalfield Taskforce and planning guidance provide a useful frame with which to discuss the end-uses of reclaimed land. In the case of East Durham a considerable amount of evidence was gathered that illustrated that 'trade-offs', of a number of varieties, were being made to ensure a particular hegemonic discourse of regeneration was being achieved. This has resulted in some activities that have caused a considerable

amount of tension with the principles of sustainability and sustainable development. The cases of Dalton Flatts, SRB5 in Parkside and wider housing issues will be explored in order to highlight the ways in which key actors engage and utilise certain sustainability discourses, but not others, in order to make claims for (in)action. These particular cases are economically orientated, with a large private sector input, and politically sensitive. As such they provide an interesting focus for discussion.

"Development needed- even on Greenbelts?"

This chapter has already paid particular attention to the case of Dalton Flatts in terms of the claims made for sustainable transport (see section 9.2.2), which were framed via a distinct set of structures, such as land use planning guidance notes. Another set of sustainability discourses were also drawn upon to argue that the site of Dalton Flatts was an appropriate (sustainable) location. For instance, an officer with the District Council suggested, in interview, that the strengths of the location were very clear,

> "One is the actual nature of the site: its a brownfield site, its a contaminated site, in general terms its the reuse of land that is brownfield rather than greenfield." (PSO:13)

These discourses engage with the need to 'reclaim' brownfield sites and the popular ideology that brownfield is better than greenfield. Indeed throughout the inquiry and interviews, key players on *both* sides accepted that the site was,

> "not a greenfield site and.....in need of regeneration in that sense. It seems sustainable to reuse sites that have been worked before." (Cons:15)

Thus the *need* to re-use the site is not really questioned- it is an *a-priori* requirement of the processes of regeneration. Those supporting the development, however, used sustainability discourses, drawn from the Coalfield Taskforce Report, to suggest that if that report is suggesting that it might, in some cases, be appropriate to develop on greenfield sites in coalfield areas, then surely this brownfield site is highly appropriate. Indeed, a planning officer for the District noted in interview that,

> "greenbelts are supposed to be sacrosanct....I mean this clearly was a brownfield site...and we felt that bearing in mind the significance of green belt you couldn't just apply that approach to that specific area." (PSO:12)

Although the brownfield status of the site was not the defining factor in the Secretary of State overturning the Inspector's decision it did have a role. By firmly placing the debates in the frames of the Coalfield Taskforce Report, which asks the Government to be more pragmatic towards planning guidance in coalfield areas, even when the principles of sustainable development are at stake, it drew attention to the political and economic nature of the situation,

> "In deciding this application, the Secretary of State considers that, on this particular occasion, the primary considerations are the exceptional economic and social characteristics of East Durham, and the consistency of the proposal with the government's commitment to the regeneration of the coalfields. He is of the view that they constitute very special circumstances which justify the grant of planning permission in this case." (GONE, 2000:para 26)

In this case, then, we see the ways in which discourses of sustainability were drawn upon to legitimate action on a piece of land, that may have un-sustainable consequences, either in terms of increased transport, the loss of trade in town centres or other factors. The land is materially and semiotically re-created into a

space for discursive battle, at the heart of which, some claimed, lay the very future of regeneration, not only within the district but elsewhere. It was suggested during the inquiry that granting this development planning approval would set a precedent for other such developments in the wider coalfield communities.

"New Houses-New Image-New People"

In a similar context, housing developments within the District provided numerous examples of land and other resources in transformation for material concerns. This was commented upon within the previous chapter, in the context of the need for physical regeneration to attract 'new blood' to the area, or rather to staunch the out migration and attract young executives (see section 8.2.2). This section provides a detailed exploration of the ways in which housing developments are being manipulated to address this desire. This illustrates how discourses of sustainability have been employed, or remain absent, in order to justify certain (in)actions. Again these actions tended to serve those with the discursive power, such as private developers, or those with political aspirations, such as local councillors.

The contextual background to housing issues in the district has been outlined in Chapter 6 (see sections 6.2.4 & 6.2.5). National Government and local perspectives frame the issues of decreasing population and low demand for social housing. For instance, Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 outlines Government intents,

> "The housing needs of all in the community should be recognised, including those in need of affordable or special housing in both urban and rural areas. To promote more sustainable patterns of development and make better use of previously-developed land, the focus for additional housing should be existing towns and cities." (DETR, 2000: para 1)

At the national level, the Government is committed to providing a decent home for everyone but also recognises issues of sustainable development. The common sustainable discourses found in housing policy are those of building re-use; housing development on brownfield not green field and certainly not greenbelt; housing developments that do not increase social exclusion or reinforce social distinctions; and housing developments that reduce the need to travel. Indeed, these reflect similar sustainability discourses found throughout Government policies in general.

The PPG3 on Housing also outlines how local authorities are to plan and meet housing needs. It is suggested that;

> "Economic growth should not be frustrated by a lack of homes for those wishing to take up new employment opportunities: but to promote sustainable development, the need for economic growth has to be reconciled with social and environmental considerations, particularly those of conserving and enhancing the quality of our environment in both town and country." (DETR, 2000: para 3)

In order to help local authorities 'reconcile' such difficulties, PPG3 outlines a series of mandates, which include the sustainable discourses as outlined above, such as,

> "[Local planning authorities should:] provide sufficient housing land but give priority to re-using previously-developed land within urban areas, bringing empty homes back into use and converting existing buildings, in preference to the development of greenfield sites." (DETR, 2000: para 2)

In East Durham there has been a particular problem with an over-supply of social housing. The ways in which this issue is described and managed reveal some particularly important discourses of sustainability and regeneration.

During interview an executive director of the Council described the District's housing problems, as such,

> "We've got 12,500 Council houses, about 800 of those are void, you know just empty, and in the long-term future we need a lot less houses, and its not about the quality of the housing. In many areas its not good, but even if the housing's perfect, if it was all double-glazed, centrally heated, the fabric was wonderful, we would not fill 12,500 Council houses. Demand has moved on.....people don't want to live in a Council houses if they can afford to buy their own house." (PSO-21)

Indeed, the Council's Housing Strategy for 1999-2004 noted that,

> "Balancing demand and supply is ideally a matter of judgement to maintain equilibrium. In our district it is not a case of fine-tuning: we have a problem of oversupply in both the public and private sectors. Too much affordable housing, poor condition stock, the trend for population decline and the preference for home-ownership are the issues we are facing up to." (District of Easington, 1999b:9)

The management response to this oversupply of social houses is underpinned by an overall ethos, described in section 8.2.2, of creating social balance and economic development through tenure diversification. The Council sees a clear role for housing developments within the processes of regeneration and has plans for new build of executive homes. The housing strategy also outlines how tenures can be altered through mechanisms such as selective demolition, stock transference to housing authorities, and sale of bungalows in pairs for conversion (*op cit*). Demolition and new build are the most contentious of these management

strategies in terms of sustainability. Which houses are demolished?, where the new build goes?, and what form it takes?, are extremely important questions. The case of SRB5 on the Council housing estate of Parkside in Seaham illustrates the key sustainability arguments emerging from the evidence.

'Parkside-out with the old, in with the new'

The background to the SRB5 project in Parkside was outlined in Chapter 6. Essentially the selective clearance of houses on the estate with the development of new low cost housing by the private sector sparked a considerable amount of controversy with some local residents. Clearly the Council were committed to wider programmes of clearance in the district, such as schemes described in village strategies for Thornley (*op cit*), but the selection of this estate and the particular houses on it, for demolition, were interesting. A number of public sector officers from the Council described, during interview, the properties selected for demolition as being in a reasonable condition. Many noted that the over supply of housing was spread across the district, and adopting a policy of only demolishing vacant properties would result in an ineffective piecemeal approach. Thus, this larger scale approach, they felt, represented an appropriate strategy. For instance, one officer suggested that,

> "had it not been for SRB5, I think that its probably likely that Parkside would have been ..... you know like many other areas- just a gradual shift and demolition after demolition after demolition. A slow creeping death.....The Council doesn't have any other resources to put into that area, and through the SRB5 process, we are able to undertake improvements to the remaining houses." (PSO-24)

Indeed, the final point made here reflects the Council's eagerness to bring on board the private sector in the management of the housing problems. The lack of public money available for housing improvements has meant that refurbishment is not a viable option. The Council has increasingly looked to the private sector for help, for instance,

> "an annual meeting is held with the House Builder's federation and regional builders to discuss District-wide strategies and to identify opportunities for partnership schemes. As a result of this meeting last year, the proposed scheme with Beazer Partnership Homes at Parkside was jointly developed." (District of Easington, 1999b:13)

During an interview with a representative for Beazer Leach I was told that in their experience,

> "demolition and rebuilding gives you the opportunity to actually build what people need, what people want, rather than refurbish what's already there which may, depending on the condition of the properties, may cost just as much or a similar amount of money and you're not really getting a new layout, a whole new road structure which is sometimes necessary to take away a stigma that is attached to an estate." (PD-45)

Throughout the evidence there was little engagement with sustainability discourses such as the energy resources involved in demolishing and rebuilding.. When questioned whether or not the SRB5 plans had taken account of Annex B Bidding guidance on Sustainable Development (DETR, 1998h), which asks bidders to consider opportunities for re-using existing buildings, recycling building materials and so on (see Appendix 13 for full details of guidance), most agreed that whilst the houses may be 'structurally sound', and the percentage of voids was low[x], funding for re-use simply did not exist. Besides which the overall needs for the District, of reducing over supply, would not be met by re-

using the buildings. Thus, in this instance, discourses of sustainability are omitted from the debates, and the Council or the developers make no claims for sustainable resource use. Yet the controversy sparked by this development led local residents to engage in such discourses.

Evidence gathered throughout the District demonstrated that the issue of demolition was highly emotive amongst local residents. Many residents felt bitter about the overall processes of decline and this new proposed management technique, noting that,

> "M1: if there had been work in the village, people would have stopped here and needed the houses. If the houses had been kept up to standard in the first place, instead of letting them run down, people would have stopped." (Thornley1 FG:28)

Indeed the PRA[xi] made similar claims and suggested that the houses proposed for demolition were not the worst on the estate. The group noted that some parts of the estate already had demolition orders in place and residents were happy to leave these houses,

> "M3: ....Once you get past Parkside shops, you have Heathway brick houses at the bottom, unity breeze-block houses in the middle and brick houses at the top. The unity breeze-block houses were earmarked for demolition. You also have Fern Crescent..... That housing is sub-standard. ....a lot of the people there have shown that they would have preferred to move to the empty houses down this end – solid sound housing." (PRA FG: 42)

The group's main claim was that Beazer Leach had chosen an area of the estate that could be cordoned off and made into a secluded private residential area. There would be no need to access the new housing via the existing road system in the estates,

> "M3.....To get to that part of the estate you've got to drive through the rest of it which obviously wouldn't suit people." (*op cit*)

This claim would seem to be supported by the comments of the private developer, as above, who suggested that a whole new image and layout is required for the estate. The group maintained that had it been involved in the decision making process it would have come to an agreement, but it found it hard to reconcile the need to destroy homes (some of which were privately owned). Indeed, when I asked the group's members why they objected to the demolition they said,

> "ALL: Because they're peoples' homes.
> ALL: Yeah
> M3: also splitting extended families up, there's a lot of extended families in that part of the estate.
> M1: Mind pet. The first reason that got me annoyed was the fact that they're destroying all of the work a person puts into their private little home where they lived, had a family, cherished, were brought up, took care of, and was taken off them at the will of the Council, including the ones that people had spent some of them buying the house themselves as security for their old age." (*op cit*)

There is evidence here of the group employing sustainable concepts such as appropriate resource use and sustainable communities (see also section 9.2.4). It suggests that empty houses could be re-used. The group also suggested that removing 200 houses from the estate and replacing them with 240 houses for sale would significantly alter the social balance of the estate and have impacts upon the local economy and social infrastructure,

> "M3: ....We know for a fact that the sub-postmaster is trying to re-negotiate his Parkside lease – he's still not had a reply from the Council in eight or nine months of trying. We know for a fact that we may well lose our school – there's one classroom empty, and come September its likely to be two classrooms empty, which may mean that headmistress might have to....

M2: The social club has also indicated that if people move out of Parkside they won't be able to....its not a club in the sense that people think it is, it ticks over.

M3: There's a newsagents, a fish shop, a post office and a grocers shop

M2: And more importantly than that they are the focal point

M3: They'll all go." (*Op cit*)

The 'sustainability' of the estate, from the group's view, would be highly compromised by the removal of 200 homes where the majority of current residents are on benefits. The group also felt that the empty houses in the area could be re-used, and that demolition and the gifting of the land to private developers was morally repugnant and resourcefully un-sustainable,

"M1: I still can't see a reason why the Council are still adamant, no legitimate reason.....X [a local councillor] told the story at a meeting, when a housewife has too many supplies she gives them to her neighbours, NO she doesn't! If she's got too many sultanas she makes a rice pudding- she uses them for something else!" (*Op cit*)

The arguments used by the residents association may have been drawn upon discourses of sustainability, namely those of inclusive participation and decision making, sustainable resource use and sustainable communities, but they tended to fall on deaf ears. Or rather the discourses did not operate in the correct structures of legitimacy, the group did not make itself heard at the appropriate times and places. Questions over the representativeness of the group, in terms of the wider resident population, may have been called into question but the point still remains that the SRB5 project has undertaken material transformations of land and buildings that have some un-sustainable elements. This has been achieved by

highlighting the regeneration and sustainability benefits to be derived from the project and obscuring the disadvantages.

9.2.2.2 Empowerment

Given recent shifts in regeneration policy and the participatory rhetoric of sustainability initiatives such as LA21 (see section 5.4.2.4), we would expect to see practices that are more bottom-up, more inclusive, and allowing communities to formulate their own strategies for change. However, the evidence collected revealed a distinct 'othering' of local people. Such that 'people' as natural beings, or as Donna Haraway (1991) suggests 'Cyborgs', are being materialised/ reinvented to become resources. As resources they are problematised as un-knowledgeable, un-skilled and ultimately lacking in 'capacity'. As such they require training, information and generally need their 'capacity' building up. Indeed, two key themes emerged from the evidence, and will be explored in the following sub-sections. Firstly, the need to empower individuals into the employment market, and, secondly, the need to empower local communities to participate more fully within the various processes of regeneration.

"Skilling-up the Disaffected"

As regards empowering individuals to become economically active, there would seem to be a fairly reflexive attitude circulating amongst those working in the regeneration forums of East Durham. This was due, by and large, to the formal cessation of the East Durham Taskforce and the various evaluations of success, that coincided with the period of fieldwork. During interview the former

executive director of economic and community development summarised his key issues over the past ten years and noted that;

> "one of the areas that we have failed in is the education side .....there's another ten or fifteen years in order to get the people with the relevant skills, the right mind-set, to enter employment that we are providing.....getting those people that are disaffected into these jobs." (PSO-18)

As noted in the previous chapter the focus upon the 'harder' issues of regeneration, such as job creation, and the scant regard as to how local people would access these employment opportunities has led to a change in thinking for many working within the regeneration arena of East Durham. There is greater recognition of the need to focus upon the 'softer' issues of regeneration, such as building confidence; altering perceptions towards employment and work; and greater levels of community development.

Yet the discourses employed in these claims are framed by an 'othering' of local people. Local people are often described as having poor attitudes, not enough skills, being criminals and/or generally not understanding that they need to participate in society and believe in regeneration. For instance, a number of interviewees in the SRB5 case suggested that those campaigning against the housing development have their own nefarious reasons,

> "they don't want it because we're going to stop illegal trafficking of drugs, tobacco, alcohol and things like that." (PSO-18)

Many interviewees noted that even after ten years of regeneration initiatives local people still required a process of skilling and attitude adjustment,

> "in terms of local people, its giving them the wherewithal, the skills, the confidence to move on. For those of working age, you know if

> they've been involved previously in the mining industry, to give them new skills, more flexible skills that will allow them to find them either employment within the District, or other employment outside the District." (PSO-54)

Some suggested that,

> "my interpretation of sustainable improvement is about skills building, and building on local people's skills that they have. It's about building them up for them to recognise that there are other things that they can use their skills to do.....that's sustainability, it's about building people's confidence and skills levels so that they can manage their own economic developments in the locality." (VSO-33)

Indeed, a number of new initiatives have been undertaken to address the issue of improving 'training for work', via the skilling up of individuals. One of them is the Intermediate Labour Markets (ILMs) initiative that is being run by Groundwork Trust in East Durham, in partnership with a number of other agencies. An officer at Groundwork explained the initiative as being;

> "a bridge to employment.....the project is set up to provide training, to set up new business opportunities, to help those on the ILMs to develop their own business skills as well, to try and create something that's sustainable beyond the time-scale that they'll be on the pilot programme." (VSO- 41)

In many ways it is similar to the initiatives undertaken in the name of community economic development (see section 8.2.3), however it is a more formal training initiative;

> "individuals will draw a wage whilst working and training, and their objective whilst doing that is to get full-time employment..... people will be trained in construction skills that will lead into that. They will also be getting advice and counselling and one-to-one on job searching, becoming job ready, and hopefully the building market will be expanded so that job opportunities in the area will be increased." (PSO-44)

This officer is talking specifically about an ILM initiative on the Parkside estate, which is part of the SRB5 initiative there. Private developers, from the housing sector, are working with the ILM providers to conduct an (ILM) programme in construction training. The issue with this sort of project is that the outputs are not easily quantifiable. There were no specific claims that these individuals would necessarily move onto such employment, or even become self-employed. The District's Economic Development strategy suggests that this sort of training will,

> "provide a bridge for long-term unemployed people to move away from benefit dependency and bringing them nearer to sustainable employment or further training." (District of Easington, 1999a:19)

The end product is not 'people in jobs', rather it is a platform to allow for changing attitudes and skills towards work that may then lead to employment at a future date.

"We have the technology to rebuild you"

In many instances knowledgeable managers are enabled to 'help' people who do not know what is best for them, who have no strategic view and lack the ability to help themselves. The term capacity building has swept through the regeneration and sustainability discourses recently, on the back of social exclusion, and those who 'do' regeneration are required to demonstrate, often via quantifiable outputs, that they can build the capacity of those they 'regenerate'. Once, and generally not before, these people are trained and capacity built then they will be able to take part in the regeneration processes and performances themselves. Some officers in the voluntary sector were quite reflexive about these processes,

> "there's obviously a lot of imbalance of power ....you've got organisations – and I'd include us in there although we try not to – that have got a wealth of experience, they've got knowledge from working outside of that particular area, we've got information ....and community groups who don't have access to that information, perhaps aren't as confident in sitting in meetings with men in suits or women in suits..... Its never easy to be able to say 'well I disagree' when you're sitting, there's you know twenty odd people sitting round a table, and you're expected because you're a member of the community to participate. That's not an easy thing to ask people to do." (VSO-22)

Whilst many interviewees in the public sector felt that communities should, once empowered become far more demanding of their Council, and even be enabled to take on board some of the tasks that the Council is currently undertaking in the name of regeneration. Thus the inclusiveness of process will allow for the transference of some responsibilities to the local community, and in turn address the issue of dependency culture. Whilst interviewing a Council officer this rhetorical transfer of responsibility to the community particularly struck me;

> "we need to be, particularly in some of the smaller... older colliery villages, be enabling people to be addressing their own problems, bringing about the sort of changes within their areas that they're wanting to see, rather than the planning officer from Easington having to go out and sort out Thornley's problems. We've got to get to the situation where those communities are actually regenerating themselves." (PSO-24)

The issue of responsibility was another key theme within the research evidence. Indeed much cynicism and suspicion has surrounded such, belated, efforts towards 'empowered' community involvement, discussed in the following chapter (see section 10.2.2).

9.2.3 Conserving Nature and Regeneration

In a similar vein to the previous section on materialisations of nature, the aim of this section is to examine the ways in which claims to conserve nature within the frameworks of regeneration are constructed using sustainability discourses. There is a distinct crossover of themes between the two sections, for instance, claims to re-create nature for the purposes of regeneration could have been discussed in the context of materialisations of nature. The framework here, however, is to explore nature conservation in the context of sustainable resource use and examine conflicting management issues. There will be a significant focus upon the case study of TTT and its aims to re-create nature alongside a multitude of other objectives. The intersections of these objectives form a series of tensions where discourses of sustainability are drawn upon to justify a series of (in)actions. Again it is those with the access to the formal structures of legitimacy who may be perceived as the 'winners'.

"One Hope....One Goal....One Vision[xii]*"*

> "It seemed an impossible dream. Create a clean coast, enhance its nature value and bring visitors to enjoy it. But that one hope, one goal, one vision is now no pipe dream. It's real." (Durham County Council cited in TTTSG, 2000:3)

On September 9th 2000 a celebration was held to mark the work conducted by the partners involved in the TTT project "to restore your coastline to its former glory" (TTTSG, 2000:2). The use of the determiner 'your' in the publicity document that announced the celebration[xiii] suggested that ownership of the coastline lay with the local communities along the coast. Furthermore, the

promotional material made a significant number of positive claims, such as those outlined within the quote above and listed in Table 9.1. Indeed, the use of verbs such as create, restore, found, and remove suggest a considerable amount of action has been undertaken on behalf of the local community and the natural habitats of the coastline. Some of these claims, however, are particularly contentious in light of regeneration and sustainability discourses. The problematics of ownership of the coast and its subsequent management, for various purposes, have led to a series of discursive conflicts, which have employed sustainability and regeneration discourses in their resolution.

Chapter 6 outlined the project's diverse aims and objectives, which reflected the agendas and backgrounds of the partner organisations involved. From the outset of the project, there existed the potential for conflicting and competing claims to regeneration and sustainability. These were signalled throughout the vision for the coast, and its underlying philosophies. A rhetorical *need* for nature conservation existed simultaneously with a desire to increase further usage of the coast in terms of development and to attract tourists/ visitors, as part of a regeneration strategy for the District. The following sub-sections explore how these competing claims for nature conservation and the overall management of the coastal zone were played out, highlighting the discursive uses of sustainability and regeneration.

- removed 1.3 million tonnes of spoil
- created 20km of coastal footpaths
- restored 12 miles of the Durham coast
- created 17km cycleway Hart to Ryhope
- founded an 8 mile TTT trail
- removed 40 derelict structures along the coast
- created nine £2000 grants for community groups
- had its won Royal Mail stamp in March 2000
- established new areas of grass land
- created 225 hectares of wildlife habitat
- spent £10 million improving the Durham Coast
- created new artworks
- 14 partners involved
- printed 30,000 new bus and train service leaflets for locals and visitors
- printed 6,000 coastal footpath leaflets
- created a TTT website

Table 9.1 Turning the Tide's Claims for Action (Source: TTTSG, 2000)

"It'll Never Be a Blackpool"

The TTT project was a significant element of a District wide strategy aimed at regeneration. The project was essentially a partnership coastal management project that aimed at 'regeneration' through a number of diverse tasks within which the coastal zone is described in terms of a productive resource. For instance, the 1998 Business Plan stated that,

> "There is great potential for the coast to regain its former importance as a valuable recreational resource for local people and to once again attract visitors from outside the area so contributing to the District's social and economic regeneration." (TTTSG, 1999a:10)

A significant aspect of the coastal resource is its nature preserve (SSSI) of rare habitats (paramartime Magnesium Limestone grassland), with scarce flora, fauna and geology. The project keenly pursued strategies to preserve and enhance this

'natural resource' through habitat creation. For instance, the habitat creation document stated that;

> "This document sets out the strategy to create, or more accurately re-create, the natural habitats of the Durham [coast]. The strategy has its roots in long-standing local authority planning policy to restore the environment of the Durham Coast and further the conservation of nature. It fully embraces the principles of sustainable development and is a pioneering example of action to enhance biodiversity." (TTTSG, 1999:iii)

The project quite clearly set out to "re-create" nature, to restore it back to its original form (regenerate it) by reclaiming land from the 'devastating' effects of the coal mining industry and the intensity of agriculture practices, using discursive claims to sustainable development to legitimise this practice. For example, the bidding document for TTT suggested that,

> "The overriding task in achieving the goal of restoring the landscape and nature conservation is....to remodel landscapes altered over the last 100 years and to create the conditions in which indigenous vegetation will re-establish." (EDTF,1995:23)

In order to achieve this task, a significant amount of land (500ha) was purchased to be managed as a 'sustainable resource'. The land was previously being used as arable land and was situated between the existing coastal SSSI and the coastal railway line (see Figure 6.3). To demonstrate a need to purchase the land, technical discourses of nature and sustainability were drawn upon,

> "As natural erosion continues, the beaches themselves are becoming narrower and there is the increasing risk of the onset of cliff erosion. Whilst this in itself is not necessarily a problem for nature conservation as long as there is sufficient fall-back land, in the case of the coastal SSSI its integrity could be threatened by being squeezed between a retreating coastline and the barrier formed by the arable farmland" (*op cit*: 24)

Once purchased, the land reverted to permanent grassland or other semi-natural habitats and ownership passed to the National Trust. An officer on the TTT project suggested that,

> "we've put it into public ownership so people can enjoy it." (QPO:66)

Yet the following section demonstrates how this transference of ownership to a *non-public body* has drawn some criticism, particularly from the local communities. Indeed, the greatest conflict that developed during the project was the issue of zoning land for the performance of certain activities at the expense of others.

During interviews I asked all the partners for their views on the potential conflict between nature conservation and increased land uses for recreation and economic development, alongside issues of zoning. An officer at the Environment Agency highlighted the issues well when he noted that,

> "It certainly is a very delicate balancing act..... perhaps almost far enough in terms of encouraging, you know, a whole lot more usage.....there may be some more things that we can do to encourage further economic regeneration and some improvements ...but its a case of actually siting it in the right place.....without having to impact upon the more sensitive conservation areas..... Say we wanted to get regeneration through tourism, then you might be saying well, you know, we want to encourage a whole load of people down onto these beaches, have ice-cream parlours and god knows what, and then you get everybody trampling all over the whole area, you know, is that consistent with the original aims of also promoting the conservation gains." (PSO:60)

Other partners, however, saw little scope for conflict between increased visitor numbers and nature conservation,

> "we don't see it as being another Blackpool, and attracting thousands and thousands and thousands of people. I think we see it .....attracting a wider local interest ...I don't ever see the coastal footpath becoming a motorway of people trudging backwards and forwards as it were." (PSO: 64)

Some interviewees mentioned the poor weather and general trend for holidaying abroad that would cut down on the potential number of visitors. Others said that they did not feel that the area was quite ready for a tourist influx and that the infrastructure was not quite in place yet. Whilst some noted that the damage caused by recreational use is low and that appropriate management and zoning of activities can prevent most damage occurring, pointing to the management of properties elsewhere in sensitive areas like the Lake District. Indeed, the interviewees tended to suggest that any problems associated with achieving the 'sustainable development' of the coast could be mitigated against, with management techniques such as zoning or integrated transport schemes (as discussed above). Even un-sustainable acts are deemed acceptable so long as they have a longer-term purpose,

> "we've spent millions of pounds having big petrol driven machinery ripping up parts of the coast, which is unsustainable but at least we're getting to a level playing field, where we've corrected what went wrong in the past. From now on, the coast will be more sustainable." (QPO:66)

The use of such claims to sustainability and the management of the coast for the purposes of nature conservation alongside other activities, however, have not been as un-problematic as the interviewees might have suggested. The zoning of the coast and general restructuring of cliff topology brought about a series of management conflicts between those involved with the project. This occurred

mainly at the nexus of community access to the resources of the coast, focused upon in the following section.

"Too many cooks spoil the broth?"

Nature conservation is clearly a costly process, as the habitats are effectively 'set-aside' land. The project required a large partnership to secure such high levels of funding - £10 million. This meant that diverse interest groups, in partnership, fought discursive battles in order to construct the (often conflicting) objectives of the project in the name of nature conservation alongside regeneration. The issue being that the 'winners' of this battle were inevitably the more 'powerful', and those with access to the space for discursive battle in the first place. The reliance upon the scientific knowledge, discursive claims to sustainability and managerial experience of each of the partners to justify their claims to action for the 'coast' left little room for the local community to participate. The knowledge and views of local people were not actively woven into the plans for the coast, as they lacked the authority with which to form their claims. As the previous section on empowerment outlined, there was a distinct 'othering' of local people in these processes, and in the case of TTT they were often seen as intruders on their 'own' land. Yet, conversely, by the end of the project they were also being actively required to be 'custodians' of the coast in the future, to ensure the sustainability (lasting effects) of the project. The aim of this section is to explore the ways in which local understandings of sustainability and coastal management have been omitted in place of the 'experts' views. This

has led to conflicting views over land-use that have at their very heart fundamental issues of sustainability.

The most contentious aspect of the TTT project has been access to the coastal zone, whether that was the headland or the beaches. This partly stems from a lack of community involvement in the project from the outset, for instance a TTT officer noted during interview that,

> "The access issue has been critical..... we thought the coast was being totally ignored, but in fact there was some very, very entrenched local interests. People like the fishermen, the dog walkers, people who like riding motorbikes up and down the beaches – who as soon as you set foot on their patch, say oh you're going to close this access, they write to their MP, they get their local councillors involved, they have a petition round the local pubs. So there was initially quite a lot of antagonism to us, in the local communities. Trying to break that down I think has been one of our successes." (QPO: 66)

The success of breaking down the antagonism is highly questionable. The aim here is to explore the issues that have arisen in Easington Colliery (see Figure 3.4). In Easington Colliery the TTT project spent nearly £3 million on the reclamation of the former colliery site and stabilisation of the cliff top via the removal of the spoil heap below, which was used on the reclaimed colliery site (TTTSG, 1999b). Also along the coast, there has also been some habitat creation and land management has been given over to the National Trust. This sparked a number of local debates over access. I met a group of local residents (ERA) who were actively campaigning to obtain an access point to the beach (the background to my encounters with the group, and particular members of the

group, is noted in Chapter 6). During a focus group interview the residents suggested that,

> "M3: .... there's been a path there for the last thirty years.
>
> F2: Oh, longer than that.
>
> M3: For cleaning the beach with big dumpers when the tide couldn't shift it.
>
> F1: It goes back ages that path
>
> F2: We've got old maps to 1858, 1856, and its not very clear but there is a marked footpath onto the foreshore. Can you see the dotted lines, straight onto the foreshore? [showing me the maps] This is Seaside Lane, and Seaside Lane was called Seaside Lane in 1856. It wasn't called Seaside Lane for nothing. It was named for a reason." (TTT FG:58)

And later during the same interview:

> F1: We had very good beach access, a lovely wide road you could take pushchairs down, and all my lifetime you could take pushchairs down onto the beach, and I'm nearly 50 so that's a long time. Now they've took it away.
>
> F2: We considered it almost a public right of way, something like that, your heritage, and the traditional way of walking down the beach." (*op cit*)

Plate 9.3 Work in Progress at Easington Colliery Beach May 2000

Plate 9.4 Work in Progress at Easington Colliery Beach May 2000

Plate 9.5 An access point to the beach at Easington Colliery

Plate 9.6 An access point to the beach at Easington Colliery

The residents group felt very strongly about access rights to the beach, claiming a heritage to using the beach via an old access route (a lane), which was provided by coal mining activities. Works conducted by TTT removed this old access route (see Plates 9.3 & 9.4: these illustrate the work in progress on the lane). Thus access to the beach became very limited, and certainly only for the able bodied (see Plates 9.5 & 9.6). ERA started to campaign to get the old route re-instated,

> F2: We wrote to John Cummings[xiv], and I said about access to the beach. He wrote back saying he's concerned that people weren't having access to the beach especially for disabled people, and that he'd write to Durham County Council and the District Council, and he got a technical reply back saying the cliffs were unstable and because of that and the proposals that they would probably shift over the next few years, that they couldn't put a path in. (*op cit*)

ERA continued to pursue the case and were often presented with technical responses from various bodies, including the TTT project team. Correspondence between the ERA and the TTT project revealed that the original design scheme for Easington Colliery had included disabled access but during the excavation process it was revealed that the natural topography would not allow such access, given that the cliff face was near vertical. In addition, the newly revealed material proved to be highly unstable and needed to be monitored before making any further decisions. Alternative sites for disabled access would be difficult to provide on the cliffs given that much of the land had SSSI designation. Indeed, a representative for the National Trust told me during interview that,

> "a lot of people just do not understand what's happening on the ground, and people do not understand what the aims of

> our organisation is. And that's not their fault, and that's not our fault, but we need to address it...and meet them half way. A typical thing at the minute, we've got a problem of access on the coast. A lot of local people want access down to the beaches. We really don't want that because that access was never there...its dangerous and its goes against the nature conservation that we're trying to develop. We're trying to get across to the local people, just because we've regenerated the area doesn't mean to say we want open access on the beach. If you went down to Devon or Cornwall, you walk along the top of the headland." (VSO:68)

This suggestion that local people were un-knowledgeable about the coastal processes and nature conservation was not borne out during my fieldwork. I found that both groups interviewed in Easington had an understanding and appreciation of the main issues. For instance, the SRI group felt strongly about nature returning to the coast,

> "M1: In fact we went down the club the other night and a lad had a bowl of winkles. They've never been on the beach for about 20/30 years. But they were eating them. The natural wildlife and that is coming back.
>
> AS: and is that important?
>
> F2: Oh most important. I tell you what, if you go along that now, and the cliffs, and the grassy banks, the wild flowers have come back and you'd wonder where they've been because they've just appeared, you know ones we've never seen for years and years, they're on that beach and on the banks.
>
> AS: And that's an important part of the regeneration thing as well is it?
>
> (Collective yes)
>
> F2: Its nature, its nature.
>
> M3: Before the pit came, we did have a sandy beach.
>
> F1: I even saw a skylark the other day and I've never seen them for years.
>
> F2: I mean there's crabs on the beach now as well you know."
>
> (Easington SRI, FG:49)

In addition, I was shown, on a walk with residents, a series of ponds that had been created by an ex-miner on land acquired by the TTT project (the land once had allotments on it but these were removed for aesthetic purposes). The ex-miner had dug the ponds merely because he was interested in wildlife. He had created a series of ponds with walkways and small benches for local people to enjoy the nature emerging there (see Plates 9.7 & 9.8). At the time I thought it was very unfortunate that a project such as TTT had not been able to harness such local capacities and knowledges. Indeed on my walk with the residents I was struck by how passionately people spoke of the nature emerging on the coast and how well used the area was by local people. Almost everyone we passed said hello to the residents showing me around.

Plate 9.7 Pond created by ex-miner in Easington Colliery

Plate 9.8 Pond created by ex-miner in Easington Colliery

Far from being ignorant of the issues, the residents I encountered had very clear views on how the coast could have been managed. I asked ERA, during interview, what they felt about the need to zone nature and restrict access. ERA highlighted that where the alternative access point was eventually installed was a designated SSSI anyway. The group clearly felt bitter about the processes that had occurred, suggesting that the beach was no better and access to it now was limited. Indeed, the TTT project did not clean the beach, the original proposal noted that,

> "consultants consider that the beaches will remain contaminated with spoil material even after the sea has eroded the beaches back to the cliff line..... a proposal for total beach cleaning... could not be justified. This would cost up to £7 million....there would be little to gain in terms of landscape and visual amenity." (EDTF,1995:19)

This would call into question a number of the claims made in the publicity document for the project celebration, as discussed above and outlined in Table 9.1 (TTSG, 2000). Indeed, the state of the beach in 2000, just prior to the celebration, is shown in Plates 9.9, 9.10 and 9.11, these scenes are hardly illustrative of the claims being made for a "restored coast" (TTTSG, 2000:2).

Given the conflicts that have occurred ERA also felt particularly aggrieved by suggestions that the local community would be required to be the custodians of the coast when the TTT project ended. The promotional document gives residents, what it calls, "a pat on the back";

> "To the residents who have patiently watched the slow transformation of their back yard, the project team extends a grateful appreciation. To you will fall the duty of becoming the new custodians of the coast, after the Turning the Tide project has long gone." (TTTSG, 2000:5).

During the focus group, one of the residents drew attention to this quote from the promotional document; it prompted her to make claims about being excluded from the beach (see 10.2.2.2). Indeed, some project partners reflected upon that fact that local communities had not been quite as involved as they should have been,

> "its got to go back to the community in some respects I think –they're the ones that are going to use it most.....what we've tended to focus on .... so far is the big sort of infrastructure stuff that had to be done to get it cleaned up and looking halfway decent. I think how its used and all the rest of it will tend to come from the community projects..... it ought to be more sustainable if the communities themselves are getting involved in it." (PSO: 64)

The use of the 'lasting' sustainability discourse here is interesting, but this comment also epitomises the issues discussed in the previous chapter, whereby, regeneration projects have tended to be large scale physical infrastructure works that have left little time nor space for community involvement. This issue will be reflected upon further in Chapter 10.

Some group members drew attention to the fact that the transference of land to the National Trust presented significant problems in public access and participation in the management of the coast. There was some concern for the fact that the National Trust had placed locked gates along certain strips of the coast. One member of the group had used the Deposit Local Plan process to air his complaints about the National Trust managing the land,

> "M1: They've handed over part of the coastline to the National Trust..... We've got locked gates..... I put a proposal to Easington District Local Plan objecting to the handing over of any public facility to any organisation that has no public accountability, and that's the way I worded it. And the National Trust is one of them. ...In the local inquiry, even the Council admit that....on page 3...the Council admit....'Mr [M1 the focus group member] is correct in stating that the Council have no jurisdiction over National Trust policy', and that was my argument when I was in front of the public inspector. When we got the locked gates..... we cannot go the National Trust as they have no public complaints procedure in place. I cannot go to the Council - they have no jurisdiction over National Trust policy. So where does it leave us? All I'm trying to do here is to get these - well I would say common land, common ground what they've handed over, back into the control of the Council and then we can make representation. That's what this is all about." (TTT FG:58)

Plate 9.9 Easington Beach after TTT works

Plate 9.10 Easington Coast after the TTT works

Plate 9.11 Easington Beach and Cliffs after TTT works

It was particularly interesting that during the focus group this debate was drawn on further and other members of the group picked out elements of the public inquiry report to read out to the group,

> "F2: Can I just finish reading what it says here about handing over to any organisation. It says "An example of this is the handing over of stretches of the coastline to the National Trust as part of the TTT initiative. The plan should include a policy to prevent such transfers." Something's gone wrong somewhere hasn't it?" (*op cit*)

The group continually demonstrated an ability to use concepts and discourses of sustainability and regeneration in order to underpin its concerns. The use of concepts such as rights of access to public land, the need for nature conservation and appropriate management schemes were drawn out on a number of occasions. Yet it appeared blatantly obvious that 'resistant' groups such as the ERA had

very little 'power' to legitimate their claims within the various structures of legitimacy that were being performed in East Durham. There were far too many actors and agencies working on the coast with so many different needs and wants themselves that the public were effectively squeezed out. These issues will be returned to in discussion of the overall thesis themes in the following chapter.

9.2.4 Sustainability- The Holy Grail?

The pursuit of something called 'sustainability', within the context of regeneration, has been likened to the pursuit of the Holy Grail (as noted in section 5.4.2.4). Legend suggests that those who discover the Grail and its secrets are assured total knowledge, everlasting life and the ability to control the elements (Henry, 2003). The quest for the Holy Grail can be likened, metaphorically, to the quest for the rebirth/ regeneration of the district (see section 5.6 for details). The quest is about ensuring life after death and specifically maintaining life at the same or newly improved level. This section emphasises the ways in which the terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable' can be used in their purely adjectival form yet still have discursive power in conjunction with other sustainability discourses, such as sustainable resource use or community empowerment. In the adjectival form the words generally refer to 'something' that can be maintained at a certain level, or can simply be described as lasting. Hence the metaphorical link to the Quest for the Holy Grail. In terms of economics and funding these are exceptional important concepts. The term sustainable is often used to refer to value for money with regards an initial investment of capital (as discussed in section 5.4.2.4).

East Durham Taskforce: Vision for The Area:

"to create a sustainable future for East Durham, with new jobs to replace those lost in traditional industries, a greatly improved environment and a revived community spirit, thereby enabling the area to become a better place to live, work and visit." (East Durham Task Force, 1997:4)

SRB5 bid: 'Integrated Regeneration in County Durham and Darlington: Strategic Vision:

"To achieve sustainable improvements in the overall social well being and economic competitiveness of the Area, by bringing about the conditions which will enable and empower disadvantaged and vulnerable people to achieve a full and satisfying quality of life, with the necessary skills, opportunities and resources to realise their economic and social aspirations." (County Durham & Darlington Regeneration Partnership, 1999:2)

Turning the Tide's Philosophies:

- To restore, enhance and conserve the environmental quality of the Durham coast.
- To encourage sustainable use and enjoyment of the Durham coast.
- To rekindle local pride and a sense of ownership of the Durham coast.

(East Durham Taskforce, 1995: 17)

Table 9.2 Key Examples of the Use of 'Sustainability' in Policy Documents & Grey Literature

The vast majority of policy documents, and other forms of grey literature, within the regeneration practices of East Durham, contained claims to sustainability in terms of aims, visions, outcomes and so on (key examples are highlighted in

Table 9.2). Authors of such documents are often anonymous, and the basis for their claims may be unknown. At the heart of this discussion are the ways in which actors working in the field of regeneration operationalised and understood these claims. This section focuses upon key two themes that were commonly discussed by interviewees, when asked for their understandings of sustainability. Firstly, the interpretations of the term in the adjectival form, with little engagement with wider discourses of sustainability, are highlighted using a discussion of the illusive self-sustaining economic interpretation. The issue of this limited interpretation of sustainability is returned to in the following section (see section 9.2.5). Secondly, the notion of sustainable communities and claims for community involvement are addressed. This follows on from the discussion of empowerment (see section 9.2.2.2) and further illustrates *why* actors have made claims to include the excluded or empower the community to take on new responsibilities.

"Ever-Lasting" Regeneration

> "M1: You hear it every week at the Council...
> M3: is that the buzz word at the moment?
> M4: There's that proposal at the moment like, they keep shouting these buzz-words in.
> M1: It used to be the capital cost, then the revenue cost, now its sustainability." (Blackhall SRI FG: 75)

Throughout the evidence the term 'sustainability' appeared as an overwhelmingly popular claim, particularly in the context of 'sustainable regeneration'. The quote above is taken from a focus group, which was made up of predominately local councillors. The group reflected the popularity of the term

but also highlighted the economic nature of its interpretation. Many actors using the term employed such discourses, which focused upon the aims of achieving a form of lasting and self-supporting regeneration. Underpinning these discourses were the dual needs to demonstrate appropriate spending of public money or a return on investment for private developers.

Discussions with public sector officers about regeneration often turned to the issue of sustainability in the 'lasting' sense. The former executive director of economic development at the District Council suggested that his job was to ensure that the Council were,

> "working on our priorities; delivering what we see as sustainable, I think, because there's not much point on putting a £20million welfare hall down and find twelve months from now its closed because no-one was going in, there's no training there, its not what people wanted, and they just didn't have the finance to run it anyhow." (PSO-18)

The need to demonstrate economic 'sustainability' has been heightened by regeneration failures of the past, nation-wide and locally, set alongside the current constraints of regeneration funding. Most funding regimes have a limited time span with a limited budget. Initiatives such as SRB tend to run for periods of five-ten years, during which millions of pounds can be pumped into an area yet,

> "once that funding stops in such a large *tranche*, how does that continue etc. And that's a real problem I think facing some areas that have gone through area-based renewal who don't necessarily have continued provision in those areas." (PSO-44)

Given the short-term nature of the funding many initiatives require managers to consider their exit strategies with 'sustainability' in mind. For instance a

representative at OneNorth East (who manage SRB project applications for the North East) noted that,

> "I go out and have meetings with potential bidders, with local authorities, with community groups. They must be sick of me now – I bang on about sustainability because as I said earlier if we don't have that, then I for one would be very reluctant to start putting money into the project. There needs to be clear articulation of how things are to be taken forward when SRB funding inevitably dries up. So I think its taken as read now, its uppermost in everybody's mind." (PSO-47)

The notion of making 'lasting' improvements from initial investments was also a pervasive theme amongst actors making claims for private investments. The SRB5 project in Parkside was framed by an overall strategic vision;

> "To achieve sustainable improvements in the overall social well being and economic competitiveness of the Area." (County Durham & Darlington Regeneration Partnership, 1999 :2)

When interviewees were asked what they felt 'sustainable improvements' meant, in the context of Parkside, the response was often associated with economic measurements of success,

> "Well, sustainable in that it will be successful, it will sell well, and in years to come, people will be able to move on and up from there, and the property will gain in value." (PD-45)

Indeed, the pursuit of stable economies was also described using discourses of sustainability. In the case of Dalton Flatts, for instance, much was made of the need to stop the leakage of expenditure from the district (see section 8.2.3). This was often framed by claims to sustainability. For instance a member of DFAG suggested that,

> "M2: Sustainability is also the fact that ..... there was a £100 million leaking out of East Durham....Every year. People going to the likes of Boldon, Teesside Park, to other shopping centres. So why should

> that money leak out of East Durham when it could be spent in our own community. You know **that's** sustainability to me." (DFAG FG-74)

Sustainability, then, in its 'adjectival' interpretation proved to be a highly popular term within the regeneration discourses of East Durham. Many actors described their take on sustainable in a similar manner to the following officer,

> "I suppose something that would be sustainable at the end of the day, that we would walk away from this regeneration project and whoever we've left in place will retain that – whether its community use, whether it is a business use – and that will remain there for twenty years, thirty years." (QPO-51)

Individuals and groups working towards regeneration want to ensure that their input, in human or financial capital, will be maintained and possibly even heightened. In order to express this desire, the word sustainable is often invoked, or if asked what the word means then the most common construction is that of lasting improvements.

Sustainable Communities

> "If you define sustainable development in its widest terms...its about having a community which you know can flourish for the foreseeable future, not just do some improvements which in a few years time will just vanish." (PSO-21)

The adjectival use of sustainability was also incorporated into claims for community regeneration initiatives within the district. The need to take action to maintain population and communities, via mechanisms such as housing initiatives, was often framed by a sustainability discourse (see section 9.2.2.1) In addition, the need for encouraging greater community involvement and a bottom-up approach reflected the (perceived) need to foster ownership and develop self-

sufficiency, of regeneration projects, in order to achieve lasting improvements. Officers working on community development initiatives frequently commented upon this using a discourse of sustainability,

> "It [regeneration] can only be sustainable if the people carry it on." (PSO-18)

Some officers were more critical of the use of the word sustainable, yet still utilised it in its adjectival fashion,

> "you've got a word that gets thrown into all sorts of conversations, all sorts of meetings, all sorts of things. We will make this sustainable. What does it mean. To me, it means that if I've got a project to say help a community group develop, that ..... When I leave in three years time there will be something there that will continue to regenerate itself, that they'll be able to get new members, to induct and support those new members, and continue to grow organically." (VSO- 22)

As noted above the call to involve, empower and skill-up community individuals/ groups to take part in regeneration is underpinned by this lasting sustainability discourse. The premise is that involvement equals encouraged ownership in the future. The number of conflicts occurring in the district, however, implies that there is some form of disjuncture. Indeed, the limited understanding and utilisation of sustainability as being mechanistically lasting has been part of the problem. Without considering the other constructive elements of sustainability, such as intra-generational equity, conflicts will inevitably occur. This will be explored in-depth in Chapter 10. The next section follows the theme of adjectival definitions and discusses the limited interpretations and uses of sustainability discourses within the district.

9.2.5 Limited 'Sustainability'

So far this chapter has addressed how various constructions of sustainability have been operationalised within the district's regeneration activities. The focus now turns to the instances where discourses of sustainability are failing to circulate. In this sense policy documents may highlight the need to address sustainability and/ or sustainable development yet, some actors and key players in the regeneration game are not engaging with the concepts or are unable to articulate the issues. A spectrum of engagement with the concepts of sustainability has emerged from the evidence, ranging from a complete understanding of the concept and a desire to operationalise it to limited understanding or a complete absence of the concept. The focus of the following sub-sections will be on the instances of missing and restrained sustainability.

Missing Sustainability

At the outset of the research process I was pleasantly surprised to discover that so many documents relating to the regeneration of East Durham seemed to draw upon constructions of sustainability. As noted above, many policy documents use the right words (see Table 9.2 for examples), yet the interpretation on the ground is often limited to an adjectival description as *lasting*. This notwithstanding I entered into the field research phase of the TTT unit of analysis, and particularly this unit, feeling sure that I would encounter many actors who were knowledgeable about the principles and practices of sustainability. My assumption was based upon the premise that the project had a 'natural' focus on

the environment, incorporating regeneration within sustainable development (the vision and underlying philosophies for the project suggested this). In addition, most of the partner agencies involved, such as the Countryside Agency, had corporate statements and strategies with regards to sustainable development (see Appendix 14 for a summary). Yet I was surprised to discover that officers working on the ground, at the 'coalface' of project delivery, often struggled to explain the concept or to even attempt to draw upon it.

On at least three separate occasions interviewees, from different agencies (in the TTT partnership- see Table 6.5), had to pause the interview to (physically) search for a definition. For instance, a representative of the National Trust struggled to provide me with a working definition that the Trust uses,

> "I've got to be totally honest with you. We're very very bad at things like this. We talk about it, but we haven't quite..umm...got our act together on it, and I....umm...if you just bear with me, I was just at a training course on Monday, we've got some policy documents which state what we think sustainable development is, and we very much aspire towards *them*.
> [searches for documents]" (VSO-68)

Other interviewees were evasive when asked how sustainability played a part in their work. For instance an officer at OneNorth East asked me to define the topic,

> "Officer: Can **you** define sustainable?
>
> AS: Funnily enough, that's what I was going to ask you.
>
> Officer: (laughing)
>
> AS: I mean, if I had said that, what would you have come up with?
>
> Officer: ...I don't think I've found a definition yet."
> (PSO:71)

Overall there seemed to be a very limited circulation of *any* of the discourses of sustainability amongst many working towards regeneration. This was not restricted to officers or project managers, some of the focus groups (community partnerships) had never heard the term sustainable development nor been introduced to concepts from the Brundtland Report. For instance,

> "AS: have you heard of the term sustainable development or sustainability?
>
> F1: You mean keeping it looking as good as this all the time?
>
> AS: Kind of. Have you heard the phrase "Think global, act local"? About doing your bit for the environment, that kind of stuff.
>
> F3: Well I recycle my paper – does that help?
>
> AS: Have you been involved with any local Agenda 21 projects or anything like that?
>
> F1: No
>
> F3: I don't know what they are.
>
> F2: Tell us what they are.
>
> AS: Sustainable development is..... [I give the Brundtland Definition]. So there's not been much filtered down from the County or the District to you on anything like that?
>
> COLLECTIVE NO" (Shotton FG: 82)

Two community partnerships, however, reflected a very strong attitude towards the concepts and discussed projects that incorporated sustainability. For instance at Trimdon I was told,

> "F4: This particular group is very **aware** of Agenda 21 issues. So first of all, the community garden was you know an area of like...it was a **sustainable** thing that you know that people could live in and enjoy. But we've also acquired another piece of land and what we're trying to do is to put back...the actual flora and reintroduce some of

> the butterflies and things that are now only in the quarry." (Trimdon FG:30)

Similarly the community partnership at Dawdon spoke of their wood recycling project and work in the local Dene to re-establish flora and fauna. Thus in some instances the concepts were being drawn upon and operationalised but often only in a restrained or limited manner.

Restrained Sustainability

Whilst there were a significant number of actors who were unable to articulate a definition of the terms that appeared in policy documents, and other literature, to which they worked, there were individuals who were more reflexive on the topic. A number of officers displayed an awareness of issues surrounding sustainability but noted that they did not put them to the forefront of their work. In particular representatives of the District Council spoke of the difficulties surrounding sustainability and how it had been difficult to place sustainable development high on the agenda,

> "its not something as an authority that up till now we've put at the forefront of our thinking.... some of the things we're trying to achieve are in conflict with some peoples' views on sustainable development in terms of using natural resources, but creating employment opportunities has been...higher up the agenda...and that's meant we haven't always done...(pause)...taken the best course of action if you were looking at it purely from an Agenda 21 perspective." (PSO-21)

Local issues and a lack of empathy with global contexts have clearly compounded these conflicts,

> "I mean if I'd said...in 1992 ... "right councillors I think that what we better start now is preparing our local Agenda 21 strategy because we really ought to be talking and thinking about sustainable

> development and creating a better environment for future generations", I'd have been...well I'd have been out of a job and I'd certainly have been laughed out of court, because you know what's this guy on (chuckling) we need jobs here before we start looking at this sort of thing. Umm...I suppose it was seen as if you try and compare your domestic circumstances, **it would have been like planting roses in the front garden when the roof was off you know** – that was the way it was regarded." (PSO:24: emphasis added)

Thus the District Council has tended to focus upon,

> "local practical initiatives so that the people in the community could get a grasp that you know what we are doing locally actually can have an effect in global terms ...I don't think that ordinary people, or many people in fact can actually identify with that sort of thing, you know its sort of a problem that is sometime never, or its somebody else's problem, or its not going to happen here its going to happen somewhere else." (*op cit*)

Such initiatives included paper recycling via the provision of a '*Blue Paperboy*' waste bin to all households; dealing with fuel poverty via energy efficiency projects such as housing insulation; providing cut price composters for people on local allotments; and so on. Yet the overall Agenda 21 strategy remained incomplete until the national deadline for Agenda 21s in 2001 approached, and even then this officer commented that,

> "I'll be honest with you...we're working at a pace now to get something down on paper solely because it's a Government target." (*op cit*)

This highly restricted operation of LA21 within the district is returned to in the following section, which provides a critical summary of the constructions of sustainability circulating and operating within East Durham.

9.3 Summarising the Patterns of Sustainability within East Durham

This chapter highlighted the mechanisms via which sustainability and sustainable development discourses are utilised within East Durham. It also provided in-depth stories at the nexus of numerous conflicts with regards to the priorities and ideals of sustainability and/ or regeneration. It is from this close examination of such conflicts and priorities that we can draw some conclusions for the implications of the various understandings of sustainability within the district. The aim of Chapter 10 is to highlight such implications by focusing upon a summary of the main patterns emergent from the analysis and to comment upon the structures via which they function. In order to achieve this, it is important to consider the wider structures via which sustainability *could* be operating.

Local Agenda 21, Sustainability and Bolt-Ons

In global contexts LA21 has been an important aspect of mainstreaming sustainable development in public and policy discourses (as outlined in section 4.3.2). Yet the discussion in section 9.2.5 demonstrated that the LA21 process in East Durham has been highly limited. Essentially, this has been largely due to *perceived* differences in priorities for the district, which have traditionally been aligned with economic development (see section 8.2.1 & 8.2.3). Work on aspects of LA21, as highlighted in Table 4.2, has been somewhat ghettoised to certain departments, or aspects of projects. For instance, the District Council has made little effort to integrate the aims of sustainable development into its policy and activities. There have been some piecemeal efforts, but they have lacked any

overall co-ordination, as outlined above. Indeed, one project officer on an SRI noted that sustainability is,

> "not a bolt-on. I think people often see sustainability as something that sounds good .... like the flavour of the month or whatever and we'll bolt it onto everything that we do, but it needs to be built in from the outset, and part of the development, whether its economic development or whatever. It needs to be there in place and people need to understand that perhaps we shouldn't look at these particular types of developments....We need to look at those [developments] and make sure they fit in with **our** sustainability strategy- if there was one! (PSPO-53)

The mainstreaming of sustainability had not been a significant aspect of regeneration strategies in East Durham. This is reflected in the fact that so few actors, taking part in the regeneration process, could provide holistic and operational definitions of the concepts. Many officers were unable to integrate a "three pronged approach" to sustainability (PSO-10), between,

> "environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and community sustainability." (PSPO:66)

More often than not actors, and policy documents, employed one of the five main constructions discussed in this chapter. Only on rare occasions were there attempts at holistic definitions and mobilisations of sustainability. For instance, the TTT project held out much hope of both, yet for a variety of reasons, essentially economic and political in nature, the process and end product did not materialise.

Conversions on the Road to Damascus

Interestingly however, a number of key actors pointed to changing attitudes, with regards to sustainability and regeneration. A representative for the LA21 team at the County Council[xv] commented that,

> "for a lot of years really they were words that we knew without understanding. And there has been a big seed-change in the last year to eighteen months I think, and its interesting that you've turned up now doing this, you've come along, because two years ago I would have sort of looked at you a bit blankly and said oh well yes we're doing some nice projects. Whereas now I would say I understand regeneration much more. ....I think because sustainability has moved up the political agenda.....everybody is talking about sustainability." (PSPO -23)

This officer provided the example of work taking place within SRB and how there had been efforts to integrate the work of the LA21 unit within the SRB processes of County Durham,

> "The people who have always done SRB, for example, they know what they are doing, they're very comfortable with SRB. We were never anything to do with that, totally separate, no links at all, barely even know the people. Suddenly, they're finding sustainability has got to built in and umm...they are therefore, they therefore come to **us** and asked us if we can do some sort of input for them." (*op cit*)

The important aspect here is the fact that sustainability has become a significant criteria for obtaining SRB funding. This not withstanding, it was interesting to hear this officer talk of the training event organised for individuals working on the SRB6 steering groups[xvi] (key players in the County level regeneration game), which was run by Joan Bennett of CAG Consultants[xvii] over a two day period and attracted at least 20 people each day. This officer commented,

> "The training was excellent. People seemed to get a lot of out of it - road to Damascus type conversions happened." (*op cit*)

Yet when I questioned the officer about these *conversions* she confided that she felt they were probably quite instrumental conversions and highly convenient given the current funding background to regeneration. She hoped, however, that more junior members of staff would be able to continue the seed-change through.

It was also important to hear a key figure in the voluntary sector talk of the need to provide holistic approaches to sustainability and regeneration within that particular sector,

> "we [DRCC] do community regeneration. CDA does business, small business regeneration, community business co-operatives. And Groundwork is obviously environmental. So we need to blend the three together and come up with our own sustainability criteria that we think should be put into everything because we're on shaky ground – we don't know what we're talking about – so we've got to come together, thrash it out, and develop it." (VSO-22)

This officer further commented upon that the common problematic that so many individuals use the term sustainability without any real definition being offered.

The accounts provided within this chapter illustrate that, often, concepts of sustainability have only been drawn upon where necessary. For instance, in funding applications, such as SRB5, or where they might serve another sort of economic purpose, such as guaranteeing the approval of planning permission for developments, in the case of Dalton Flatts. The processes employed have been highly reformist, whereby concepts of sustainability can easily be moulded to be "fit-for-purpose". The important point being that those with the ability to enact the moulding won forth and became the victors of the discursive battles. This

context provides the basis for part of the discussion and analysis provided in the following chapter.

[i] Census Data 1991.
[ii] http://www.williamhenry.ney/H-Bomb.htm accessed May 2003.
[iii] Documents associated with the inquiry include: core documents which are drawn upon in the inquiry, such as the local plan, PPGs and so on; submission documents from the interested parties; and evidence submitted during the inquiry.
[iv] Mr.Cave, consultant for Chesterton and author of the submission document from Matthew Fox Developments Ltd.
[v] A distance of one kilometre is generally taken to mean within reasonable accessibility by foot. Fewer than 4,000 people live within a kilometre of Dalton Flatts compared to 11,000 and 6,000 for Peterlee and Seaham, respectively (The Planning Inspectorate, 1999:35).
[vi] "M4:....we haven't got a cinema in the district, ten-pin bowling. If we need that, we've got to travel outside the district. Why should we travel outside the district?" (Blackhall SRI Focus Group:75).
[vii] ING Real Estate are the developers of Dalton Park.
viii The report estimated that within five years 250,000-3000,000 visitors per annum could be expected (EDTF,1995:29).
[ix] This strategy was later operationalised as the Access Strategy (TTT Steering Group, 1998).
[x] The percentage of voids in the area proposed for demolition was approximately 5% compared to the national average of 3%, but some estates in the UK can see void rates rise to 40% (Cole et al,1999).
[xi] The PRA actively campaigned against the demolition process proposed in SRB5. The basis of their complaint was that the local community had not been involved in the decision making process.
[xii] Title taken from TTTSG's promotional document, titled 'Turning the Tide on the Durham Coastline" distributed in September 2000 to announce the "Sea of Lights" display, a series of fireworks displays along the coast (see TTTSG, 2000).
[xiii] *Op cit*- as delivered to households within the District.
[xiv] Local MP for Easington District.
[xv] For details of Durham County Council's LA21 see, http://www.durham.gov.uk/durhamcc/usp.nsf/pws/LA21+-+Issues+and+Progress
[xvi] SRB6 was in the planning stage at this time.
[xvii] For details on CAG Consultants & Joan Bennett see http://www.cagconsultants.co.uk/

10.1 Analysis and Discussion

The aims of this chapter are twofold. Firstly, the chapter will focus upon a discussion of the two main themes of the thesis: a) the social power and legitimacy that underpins the translation of slippery rhetorical concepts, such as sustainability and regeneration, into policy and practice; and b) the lived experience of industrial contraction in a former coal mining area. Here discussion will generalise out from issues that have been raised within Chapters 6 to 9, and focus upon the wider meanings of the thesis 'findings' for different ways of understanding the concepts being explored. Secondly, this chapter will address the significance of the 'findings' illustrated throughout Chapters 6 to 9, by relating these back to the terms of thesis agenda. I want to focus upon what I have 'found' and how this relates to the theoretical underpinnings and methodology, as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3. I will address issues such as difficulties with the performance of ethnography, including the problematics of research attrition, and the limits to the constructionist agenda, commenting upon further developments to theory in light of this context.

10.2 The Functionality of Sustainability and Regeneration Discourses in East Durham: Social Power and Legitimacy

The functionality of discourse has been a key theme throughout the thesis. The previous three chapters highlighted a distinct variety of constructions of both the concepts of regeneration and sustainability. This has clear implications for the rhetorical, and practical, functionality of the concepts at the local level. In particular the social power of certain actants over others, in specific contexts, has led to the facilitation of claims for numerous (in)actions. Chapter 2 outlined the

need to contextually analyse discourses (of any concept) in terms of the claims themselves, the claims-makers, and the claims-making process (Best, 1987), focusing specifically upon how such claims function (illustrated in Figure 2.1), where they are used (are essential), how they are used, what actions they facilitate or impede, and (powerfully) who gains and who is harmed by the claims (Gergen, 1994). By exploring this 'circuit of culture', tracking actions, rhetorical claims, and transformations of meanings (Johnson, 1986), this thesis has been highly successful in revealing which discourses of sustainability and regeneration are employed (and implicitly not employed) and by whom, within the rhetoric, practice and performance of regeneration. Indeed, a series of conflicting discourses have been constructed through 'negotiation' within, and out-with, a large network of actants[i] and web of structures. The aim of the following sub-sections is to illustrate the nature of the social power and legitimacy which lie within, and are constructed by, these networks.

10.2.1 Actants & Structures of Legitimacy

The empirical evidence demonstrates that a high degree of social power lies with actants who are able to utilise appropriate discursive spaces and concepts. These actants have access to the 'right' form of information in order to structure their claims, and they understand which 'rituals' they can present this information within. They are well equipped to perform (within) these 'rituals' and ultimately 'win' the discursive battles (negotiations). The following two sections highlight the ways in which actants can facilitate or impede the circulation of knowledge. There will also be a focus upon the performativity of claims, where and when they

are drawn upon, and how powerful they can be. The aim is to illustrate the circulation of knowledge, the various structures of legitimacy and the performativity of discourses.

Structuring Legitimacy

The thesis highlights a number of discursive battles in which actants draw upon constructions of sustainability and regeneration. The actants tend to use current Government policy or bidding guidance to legitimate their claims for (non)action. Many policies are set at the national level, such as PPGs, White Papers and so on, and interpretations at the local level will reflect these policies, in particular local plans are required to do so. During the Dalton Flatts public inquiry, actants drew upon selective parts of policy to legitimate their claims but, significantly, such claims could *only* be framed by 'policy'. Indeed, one interviewee found it confusing to be pressed to talk about sustainability issues that might have been missing during the public inquiry because he felt that, whilst there might be other sustainability points, he was guided by Government policy. He felt that using sustainability issues not grounded in policy would allow opposing council to counter claim,

> "if in a public inquiry forum if I was to go along and there were these other sustainability issues that would be countered by the other side by saying '*there's nothing in government policy which says...*' That's not to say one couldn't put those arguments but you've always got to nail it to some sort of independent authority really." (Cons:15)

Alternative arguments could easily be subverted by reference to lack of attention within Government policy. Indeed, the referral to policy as 'independent authority' is particularly interesting given that policy is far from objective and

independent - it is not derived in a vacuum, it too is socially constructed. Yet it has a distinct authority, and to draw upon claims from outside of policy would have been inappropriate.

In the case of Dalton Flatts, it was clear that actors could only draw upon constructs of sustainability in reference to transport or land reclamation, as these are the prevalent sustainability discourses within planning policy. Discourses which engaged with the more social aspects of sustainability, such as equity and quality of life, were difficult to weave into 'legitimate' arguments, unless they appeared within some form of 'policy'. There were occasions, for instance, when the CTFR was drawn upon to demonstrate 'need' for development, or discourses of social exclusion were drawn upon, such as access to the facilities that Dalton Flatts would provide.

Another form of legitimacy was found in 'independent' surveys. These were classed as solid grounds for making claims. In the case of Parkside, the District Council was initially able to 'demonstrate' that the majority of the estate wanted the changes that were planned by presenting the results of their door-to-door survey. The PRA attempted to destabilise this claim by producing their own survey. The Council would not accept this as valid, suggesting that the PRA used 'bully-boy' tactics to obtain favourable responses. Thus the PRA sought an 'independent survey'. Numerous actants, myself included, were approached by the PRA to conduct this survey. After months of campaigning, including failed appeals to the local ombudsman and High Court, the intervention came from Central Government. A Minister from the DETR sanctioned a survey, by MORI.

It should be noted here that the PRA found it particularly difficult to obtain any information throughout this process. The District Council were highly reluctant to enter into any form of dialogue with the group. One group member claimed that the Council had 'banned' him from communicating with them. During my encounters with the group I was often struck by the limited information and funds it had with which to form resistance- one group member was fortunate to find a local solicitor[ii] prepared to work pro-bono on the High Court appeal. This was all in distinct contrast to the case of Dalton Flatts.

During the Dalton Flatts inquiry a number of 'experts' gave evidence, as noted in section 7.2.6. These people were consultants who had prepared impact assessments, such as the TIA. This evidence was costly to produce and funded by the two private developers in the case - Matthew Fox Ltd, who were proposing the development, and Modus Properties Ltd, who opposed the development on the grounds that it could propose a threat to planned developments in Peterlee town centre. Essentially these are economic and market forces entwined in the production of knowledge in order to further particular interests (see section 10.3 for further discussion). Not only did these market forces produce knowledge for formal consumption within the inquiry, but also fuelled circulations of knowledge on a much less formal basis. During the evidence gathering process, it was clear that certain 'stories' were circulated, or rather selective information was fed, between the groups or individuals involved. Often less powerful groups, such as the DFAG, were provided with stories or selective information in an attempt to fuel, dampen down or stop certain debates. For instance, during my informal

meetings with members of the DFAG I was aware that they were obtaining 'stories' from somewhere that were fuelling suspicions over the County Council's decision to object to the development. Quite how these stories circulated was not revealed to me, but it was clear that less powerful groups were often being manipulated. Surely it was highly beneficial to the developers if the DFAG campaigned for the development- the developers never seemed far away. It was never clear to me who funded the banners that lined the streets during the inquiry, the children's T-shirts and flags with pleas for "*a brighter future*", the balloon release or the hoarding on the side of the A19 (see plates 7.1, 8.1, 10.1, and 10.2). Indeed, one interviewee commented,

> "I wasn't party to how the support was being orchestrated, and I'm not trying to suggest necessarily anything untoward was done, but clearly if one is in the game of PR there are ways of trying to ensure maximum support is got.... when the public were talking about swimming pools and leisure centres and those sorts of things.... **had they really understood exactly what the proposal was?**" (anon: emphasis added)

In many cases the circulation of knowledge was far from fluid nor without constraint(s). The stories of regeneration and sustainability that were constructed by the actants were highly instrumental and performative.

The evidence, presented throughout this thesis, clearly demonstrates that there were structures and frameworks for (in)appropriateness of arguments and constructions. Butler (1993) refers to this 'citationality', through ritualised reproduction, as the means of stabilising discourses. The circulation of discourses is highly constrained by regimes of funding and policy, privileged discourses are utilised by actors 'formally' involved in the act(s) of regeneration (or

sustainability). As a result local community members have felt 'dis-empowered' by this (dis)junction of discourse. Yet the emerging evidence from this research, and elsewhere (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998), suggests that local people have a distinct lack of faith in formal institutions and tend to act in resistance to dominant hegemonic discourses that threaten their everyday lives.

Plate 10.1 Banners greeting the Inspector on Day One of the Dalton Flatts Public Inquiry 1999

Plate 10.2 Balloon Release on Day One of the Dalton Flatts Public Inquiry

10.2.2 Facilitating and Impeding Regeneration and Sustainability

Regeneration rubric and rhetoric has evolved under the new Labour Government to include a focus upon the enabling of 'governance', working in partnership with local institutions to deliver initiatives, and move away from controlling 'government' (Tiesdell & Allmendinger, 2000). There has been a greater recognition of the concept of social capital, integrating people and communities with the traditional bricks and mortar approaches to regeneration, the blending of hard and soft regeneration (see section 5.4.2.2-3 and throughout Chapters 8 and 9). The new Labour Government seems to be committed to community participation with its new approaches that incorporate joined-up management and initiatives such as Best Value (Foley & Martin, 2000). In addition, issues of sustainability, such as equity and participation, have also made an appearance with the incorporation of sustainable development rhetoric in many policy directives, such as the Government White Paper '*A Better Quality of Life*' (DETR, 1999a) and bidding guidance (see Appendix 13). Yet the overwhelming evidence presented within this thesis, and by others (Anastacio *et al*, 2000; Atkinson, 1999; Banks & Shenton, 2001; Bennett et al., 2000; McGregor *et al*, 2003; Forest & Kearns, 1999; Osborne *et al*, 2002; Duncan & Thomas, 2000; Lucas *et al*, 2003), suggests that regeneration initiatives, local and central Government, are not adequately involving local people, nor are the initiatives particularly well joined-up.

In East Durham the evidence highlights a distinct gap between the rhetoric of soft regeneration, such as community participation, and the reality of highly

constrained, and overly structured, circulations of knowledge and performances of 'harder' regeneration. Some actants are far better 'equipped' than others to participate. Some are more 'empowered' than others to utilise discourse(s), drawn from a range of (in)formal structures, to legitimate their claims for (in)action. Thus, social power and legitimacy can lie with those who have access to the appropriate discourse(s), knowledge, and discursive space(s). These actants have the ability to facilitate and impede regeneration and sustainability. The following sub-sections highlight the processes via which hegemonic forms of regeneration and sustainability discourse have been strengthened due to weaknesses within the processes of community participation.

10.2.2.1 The Problematics of Participation

Throughout the fieldwork it was widely recognised that community involvement within sustainability and regeneration projects was a complicated and difficult process. Alongside claims that community members generally lacked the 'capacity' to be involved were other key issues such as local politics and parochialism, the usual suspects syndrome, and the difficulties arising from funding regimes. These problematics have resulted in numerous conflicts across the District that have had severe implications for regeneration and sustainability within East Durham. The aim here is to further unpack and discuss these problematics of participation and empowerment.

Perversity and Community

> "Communities are diverse, conflictual and perverse." (Banks & Shenton, 2001:296)

Communities are inherently hard to define (Hill, 1994; Meegan & Mitchell, 2001). They are diverse and, as Banks & Shenton suggest, can be perverse- not all members of the community hold the same beliefs or have the same needs. In their study of resident experiences of regeneration projects, Anastacio *et al* (2000) found that if the community is seen as a homogenous group then only the powerful voices will be heard. The way in which the concept of community, within regeneration and sustainability, is constructed plays a significant role in the processes of social power. Ignoring diversity in the community, and polarising from the 'community' (as a homogenous mass) to the 'individual' (as a set of heterogeneous people) who needs 'help', can heighten the problematics of participation and perpetuate social exclusion (Kearns & Turole, 2000).

Local Politics

The evidence within this thesis highlighted widespread parochialism as a key issue within the processes of participation. Many old grievances, especially amongst local councillors, and issues of equity have surfaced during consultation exercises and empowerment activities. For example, during a meeting of a community partnership at Thornley[iii] I witnessed a very heated discussion regarding correspondence from an elected member of Thornley. This member had requested copies of minutes from the partnership's meetings. It became quite evident that the group was very aggrieved with this local councillor. One woman said "he's stopped us doing regeneration". Others in the group noted that this councillor had been a barrier to them obtaining certain funds. There was a great deal of animosity towards this person, with claims that he was not interested in working with the

group unless he could control it and take credit for what *they* were achieving. An officer at the District Council reflected this problem, during interview, and how it has been dealt with,

> "Thornley, has taken some time..... what I do then is I walk away from it. I say that neither myself or any of my team will come to referee squabbles, you've got to sort your differences out, get your platform and let us know. When you've done that, we'll come in, we'll provide you with professional expertise that will help you bid for funds in order to deliver what you want". (PSO-18)

It seems somewhat against the grain of capacity building and empowerment for the local Council to walk away and leave the community to deal with this. Indeed other actors noted that individuals can be put off from participating in formal structures because they,

> "are frightened of the politics of the thing. They don't become involved because they might upset a councillor or whatever." (VSPO-32)

Indeed, where is the community development, capacity building and empowerment that the rhetoric calls for? In a study of community development, Duncan & Thomas (2000) found that regeneration programmes still do not employ significant resources to community involvement when preparing bids. Indeed, this fundamental level of community development is often over-shadowed by funding and political regimes. The timescales and finances of funding regimes do not allow for adequate community development and participation. The cases of TTT and SRB5 in Parkside highlight this problem, and its associated consequences. Anastacio *et al* (2000) suggest that increased time and resources should be provided to enable communities to develop their own agendas. Within East Durham it is clear that a lack of time and resources have resulted in limited

participation. Indeed, Robinson & Shaw (2001:473) suggest that,

> "Almost all the institutions of governance in the region, both elected and unelected, are run by, predominately, middle-aged (or older) middle-class men.....they should be run by people who are representative of the diversity of the community."

With this is mind, I turn to the issue of representativeness and community participation in East Durham.

Whose Community - The Usual Suspects?

During my time in the field I attended many community partnership, resident association and action group meetings. I often came across the same individuals at these meetings. It seemed that certain villages only had two or three individuals who were 'participating'. I got the feeling that often there was little new 'capacity building' taking place. For instance, one officer spoke of the difficulties of getting a 'true consensus' from local people when they were speaking to less than ideally representative groups. He added that on occasion there might be,

> "a parish council meeting, a tenants action group meeting and ... the local Settlement Renewal Initiative Committee meeting, and the people running between them because the same people are often involved in those different groups." (PSO-24)

Throughout my fieldnotes I called this the 'Usual Suspects Syndrome' and often mused on how *representative* these groups were of the wider community. Officers seemed to be aware of the issue but were often unable to offer any alternatives;

> "there are all sorts of issues of whether that is truly representative and I've been in the business long enough to know that you're not going to satisfy everyone, but at least it is a way that there is a network there." (PSO-47)

It seemed that so long as some form of consultation was taking place, the public sector officers were satisfied. The associated difficulties of arranging joined-up

consultation between disparate local groups was also noted,

> "with 17 partnerships, they all meet at different times, again they don't all meet monthly – some of them meet bi-monthly, some of them meet quarterly, some of them have stopped meeting at all (laughing)." (PSO-54)

In addition, it was even more complicated to get these groups to have an input at the more strategic level, say for instance on the SRB county-wide strategic partnership.

Many of the community partnerships, or other types of local groups, that I met spoke of the difficulties of attracting and maintaining group numbers. They often attributed this to the timescales involved in the funding regimes, and the complexity of the application processes. Many public sector officers also spoke of their apprehensions of involving the public in consultation for fear of building up hopes and then having to explain why funding has not come through for them. For instance, I met one particularly disheartened group member who said,

> "I mean we just get so depressed.... I've said quite openly I'm just not going to stay in the group anymore..... It's just a waste of time, it is really...they build you up, and they drop you. You're very disillusioned." (Dawdon FG:35)

Many of these local regeneration groups seem to be taking part in a constant 'battle' for political and financial recognition. They frequently voiced their suspicions behind the motives of the public sector to involve them. I often got the sense that they felt very alienated from their local Council, particularly groups to the west of the district who have had less support than those operating to the east. For instance, in Thornley the group illustrated this with reference to the recent consultation for SRB Round 6,

> F1: SRB6 is a classic example. The District is putting bids together, sent a letter out, pro-forma projects, "what Thornley would like to do?". We got together, decided what projects or what we would like to see spent in our village had a meeting and then we were told they were over-subscribed by £2.5 million. So where does that leave us? So **ours** were put on the back burner. They already **know** what they're spending the money on before the bids come out, and its all over. We get nothing.
> (Collective yes.)
> .....
> F4: Well they involve us but they're not giving us anything.
> F1: There's no consultation at all.
> F2: It's paid lip-service to, and done in the most contained way.
> F4: but **its already decided**." (Thornley1 FG:28 original emphasis)

This group further claimed that if it did not have the two community development workers (who work outside the District but live in Thornley) on the group;

> "F4: We'd be lost because we're not getting nothing from the Council.
> F3: Its empowerment without any knowledge. **How do you get empowered without the knowledge?**
> F2: Mushrooms kept in the dark- fed them a bit now and again."
> (*op cit* emphasis added)

Throughout my evidence gathering process, I was struck by how hard these dedicated *few* actually have to work - even at the basic information gathering stage. Members of the community do want to participate[iv], but are often very suspicious of the motives of many other groups and individuals involved within the process. The quote above demonstrated how the group at Thornley felt they were only 'involved' when the public sector *needed* them in order to secure funding. The group most certainly did not feel fully 'included' nor enabled by the empowerment processes operating within the regeneration initiatives around them.

It was apparent that there is little trust between the 'community' and the agencies

of local governance. Communities feel that their input is of little value; that they are over consulted with little action shown for it (see section 10.4.1 for comments on research attrition); and that the priorities of the regeneration programmes have been decided in advance. Recent studies by Anastacio *et al* (2000) and Duncan & Thomas (2000) concur with this finding. Forest & Kearns (1999) suggest, in their study, that,

> "residents wanted to be in control of deciding priorities which professionals would then pursue on their behalf. In particular, they wanted greater priority for everyday concerns relating to local public services relative to "big (regeneration) ideas"."

In their work on community involvement and sustainability programmes Macnaghten & Urry (1998) found similar feelings of powerlessness amongst the groups they interviewed, suggesting that respondents held a lack of faith in institutions of the state, a weak sense of personal agency, and little trust in information provided by the state.

Local people want to be involved in affairs that matter to them. Yet the evidence suggests that the discursive performances of regeneration and sustainability are acting as barriers to inclusion. Where, however, there are distinct (dis)junctures of discourse some members of the local community are adopting resistant tactics.

10.2.2.2 Grassroots Resistance and Empowerment

Football Supporting

There are, of course, many reasons for poor public involvement. Quite simply some people are just not interested, and not necessarily because they lack 'capacity'. During an informal discussion, a housing association officer posited the hypothesis that community participation is much like the act of following football: there are those who will go to every game religiously (home or away) and actively become involved in supporters groups; then there are those who are happy to merely attend the odd game; whilst there are those who might just follow the scores of their team in the news; and then at the other end of spectrum there are those who simply are just not interested in football! When I put this analogy to a voluntary sector officer she agreed and noted that,

> "you're not going to change that unless its relevant to them, and unless its something that's specific to their needs at any one time." (VSO-33)

Indeed *relevance* would seem to be a key issue. During a focus group at Blackhall, a local councillor told the group;

> "the first problem I had with criminals ..... we had a public meeting and there were no posters put up, it was just by word of mouth, and there was over 200 people in that hall..... We've got very strong public opinion when necessary but they're not the sort of people who just come out for anything – there's got to be something they really want." (Blackhall SR1 FG:75)

If there is an issue that people feel strongly enough about then they will 'act', and this is evident in cases where action groups have formed, or been mobilised, in resistance, such as the DFAG.

Discursive Battles

The numerous conflicts over regeneration projects in East Durham, outlined within this thesis, illustrate a distinct irony to such initiatives. The rhetoric of current regeneration and sustainability programmes calls for community participation, empowerment and capacity building, yet I discovered many action groups campaigning for their right to be *heard* and to have a role within regeneration. For instance, two major regeneration initiatives operating within the District, SRB5 and TTT, had sparked considerable controversy within the local communities that they were purporting to 'regenerate'. In both cases the main points of contention centred around a lack of community involvement at an early stage. For example, a number of officers, working as part of the TTT partnership, suggested during interview, that the funding opportunity provided by the Millennium Commission, required a quick response from those involved, and as a result it was suggested that,

> "the local communities were **not** greatly involved. There was just a bit of sort of information **giving** – that was as much involvement as there was..... certain difficulties that cropped up because of that but had it **not** gone on, you know, in that sort of way it wouldn't have happened at all because there wouldn't have been time to sort of gather...sort of...public opinion around, behind it." (PSO -56 original emphasis)

The ERA in Easington colliery reflected this when I asked whether the group, and residents in general, felt that they had been consulted prior to the work starting on the coast,

> "F2: Not really
> M1: They had a survey in the library –asking for suggestions. Now I put my suggestion in, ... but I've never heard that ever mentioned again, whether any of these suggestions were taken up or nothing like that.

> F2: It was presented as though this is what you're going to get. Wasn't it?
> F1: The artists impression of our beach access down there, it was lovely and what...
> F2: ....it also showed a path down to the beach, down over red ash site, and they changed the proposals, and the changed proposal didn't go to public consultation. I thought they were wrong in that, it really should have gone to public consultation." (TTT FG:58)

This is reminiscent of so many stories in East Durham. Some form of 'consultation' took place, a basic information *provision* exercise, but the views gathered by the exercise are not clearly demonstrated in the works that subsequently take place.

Similarly in the case of SRB5 on Parkside, the perceived lack of community consultation led to confrontation. The PRA felt excluded from the consultation process, claiming no prior involvement before being presented with the plans for selective demolition and estate renewal as *fait au complet*. Like numerous other groups and individuals within the District, the PRA were very bitter about the processes of regeneration, and the rhetoric of community involvement and sustainability. Indeed, in Easington Colliery concerns over the TTT project drove members of the ERA to directly highlight the issue of social inclusion,

> "F2: They said it was about development, regeneration, and social inclusion. **Social inclusion** [said with surprise] we're not being socially included at all are we!? We've been excluded you can't even get down onto your own beach! "(TTT FG:58)

This group felt that the process was not about regeneration for *them*,

> "F2: The people that's come into to do work they don't live here they haven't considered the people of Easington – it's as if we didn't matter. Once again we're being told 'this is what you're going to get' and not asked what would you like.
> F1: And that is their consultation.
> F2: Top down instead of bottom up." (*op cit*)

The group was aware of the principles of bottom-up regeneration schemes, and that regeneration should be about bringing the community together, yet the overwhelming feeling was that this has not happened with the TTT project. Throughout the focus group, and during other community group meetings, it was clear that the group found it difficult to make itself heard in the process. Group members spoke of not knowing who to contact, being passed from one person to another, with little action ever being taken and complained that responses received were often technical in detail, there was a (dis)junction of discourse. That whilst their concerns were very real and framed by issues of sustainability and regeneration, they were not using the appropriate claims, not using the right language, in order to access or facilitate their demands, nor were they using the correct channels of communication. Given their lack of involvement in the project, they were also unable to form a challenge to the discourses that had become hegemonic from the outset. Their space for discursive challenge remains at the local level, in residents group meetings, however they are fast learning the rules of the game and beginning to form a discursive challenge.

Throughout the evidence gathering process, I found myself wondering if there was a real lack of 'capacity' within the District. Given that so many of the these activist groups and individuals seem to be able to organise themselves and campaign for what they feel strongly about, why are there so many claims to a 'lack of capacity' and a need for 'empowerment'? Perhaps local groups do not understand the 'bigger picture'? But they are capable of drawing upon it if required. There is a discursive clash- *a (dis)juncture of discourse* - between what

the local governance can, or indeed may want to deliver, as opposed to the perceived priorities of those in the local community.

10.3 Regeneration & Sustainability as Political-Economic Games

Essentially the language(s) of sustainability and regeneration are *privileged* discourses. They are used within discursive settings to legitimate a host of (in)actions. They are performed through a variety of formal and informal structures. Social power tends to lie with those actors who can use the discursive spaces and concepts. This often results in a (dis)juncture of discourse whereby those not using the privileged discourses feel dis-empowered, and sometimes adopt resistant discourses to challenge these 'normalised' discourses. Hence we find discursive battles are occurring at this (dis)juncture and it becomes clear that regeneration and sustainability are very much part of a political-economic game. A high degree of social power lies with those actors who are able to utilise the appropriate discursive spaces and concepts, and as a result of this the rhetoric of the concepts of sustainability and regeneration is generally not being played out in the regeneration performances taking place within East Durham - its much more of a (wider) political-economic game, with distinct 'winners' and 'losers'.

The dynamics, and key actants, of this game have been highlighted throughout the thesis and this section draws upon two key themes for further illustration and discussion. The themes of empowerment, which has formed a strong element of this chapter so far, land reclamation and biodiversity, alongside habitat (re)creation, are re-examined to in order to explore the political and economic cultures of regeneration and sustainability. Here I am drawing heavily upon issues

introduced in section 9.2.2 - materialisations of nature, which highlighted the ways in which constructions of nature (and human beings) are being materially and symbolically transformed as 'resources', framed by sustainability discourses, to form the basis of some regeneration activities within the area. This discussion is extended arguing that rhetoric claims of both sustainability and regeneration are being used to facilitate activities which may, at their very core, lead to un-sustainable or un-regenerative outcomes.

10.3.1 Empty Vessels and the Culture of Regeneration

Throughout this thesis the theme of empowerment, and its associated notions of capacity building and participation, have become instrumental to exploring the regenerative activities taking place in East Durham. In exploring the key actants in the processes of regeneration, and examining the social power and legitimacy of these actants, it has been clear that such individuals and groups are operating in structures of (uneven) power. The power relationships between the various actants have been maintained via a set of privileged discourses and discursive spaces. Indeed, Wood (2000) suggests that exclusion will continue unless these power relationships are challenged. The various conflicts in East Durham demonstrate that there is 'capacity' within the community to undertake such a challenge- local people are not "'empty vessels' simply waiting to be filled" (Henderson & Mayo, 1998:v). A wealth of local knowledge and skills exist within the local community- so why is this capacity not being harnessed within regeneration programmes?

A strong element to this problem is due to the culture(s) of regeneration within

which the regeneration programmes operate. It has already been shown that those 'in charge', or with the greater power differentials, are often the Councillors, officers, professionals and private developers. Duncan & Thomas (2000) found similar situations in their study and further suggested that the roles and responsibilities of key individuals were rarely clearly established. Indeed, within Chapter 7 the overwhelming myriad of players in the regeneration game operating in East Durham, reflects a piecemeal, under co-ordinated, set of structures aimed at 'joined-up' regeneration and local governance.

Actants are playing a game of regeneration in which the cultures are highly patriarchal (Brownill & Darke, 1998); white (Robinson & Shaw, 2003); paternalistic (Bennett *et al*, 2000; Forest & Kearns, 1999); political (McGregor *et al*, 2003); economic and competitive (Oatley, 1998). Within these, local knowledge and needs tend to get neglected, and whilst the new Labour Government has laudable aims of 'joined-up' working these are not yet being achieved. Recent work by McGregor *et al* (2003) suggests that many of the national and local initiatives which aim to regenerate communities and tackle social exclusion are still a long way from the goal of genuine partnerships and multi-agency working. They argue that Central Government could be doing more. At present Government departments are not joined up, policy is highly segmented and each department operates under differing regimes of auditing and monitoring. This has significant impacts at the local level where differing priorities, timescales and boundaries for initiatives make working in regeneration complex, costly, time consuming, stressful and far from effective. Indeed, some of the very issues that

should be tackled, such as social exclusion, can end up being reinforced through these discursive performances and structures.

The cultures of regeneration need to change at all levels - from central Government to local governance. Regeneration will always be partial, ineffective and exclusionary without significant attention being paid to the processes which underpin the socio-economic and environmental problems that regeneration initiatives attempt to tackle. Funding regimes and policy dicta should incorporate a focus upon local problematics and the, sometimes subtle, nuances of operating programmes at the local level. Anastacio *et al* (2000) and Waddington *et al* (2001) both stress the importance of bottom-up approaches, but also suggest a need to avoid the polarisation between bottom-up and top-down and focus upon better dialogue between different governance structures and community interests.

10.3.2 Weak Sustainability and Weakened Regeneration

In addition to the need for the cultural changes outlined above, there is a need for a greater incorporation of the principles of sustainability within regeneration performances. This thesis has examined how partial and limited constructions of sustainability have been used within regeneration performances to legitimate a host of (in)actions. For instance, Chapter 9 highlighted the ways in which constructions of nature (and human beings) are being materially, and symbolically, transformed as 'resources', framed by the sustainable development discourse, to form the basis of 'regeneration' for the area. The case of TTT was used to illustrate how issues of biodiversity and habitat (re)creation were woven into regeneration performances. The project quite clearly set out to "re-create" nature,

to restore it back to its original form (regenerate it) by reclaiming land from the 'devastating' effects of the coal mining industry and the intensity of agriculture practices, using sustainable development to legitimise this practice. As Escobar (1996) suggests, the discourse of biodiversity, stemming from sustainable development, constructs an equation between 'knowing' (using western scientific methods to classify and quantify the importance of species), 'saving' (from destruction/ extinction) and 'using' (for the 'regeneration' of the coalfield area). So we see nature conservation used to justify actions that have at their very heart an economic basis (attracting inward investment by improving the utility of the environment), with some associated social, cultural and environmental bonuses.

Nature conservation is a costly process, as the habitats are effectively 'set-aside' land bought as part of a process of luxury consumption (Katz, 1998). A project such as TTT required a large partnership to secure high levels of funding - £10 million (see Table 6.5). This meant that diverse interest groups in the partnership fought discursive battles in order to construct the (often conflicting) objectives of the project in the name of nature conservation, alongside regeneration. The reliance upon the scientific knowledge and managerial experience of each of the partners to justify their claims to (in)action for the 'coast' left little room for the local community to participate. The knowledge and views of local people were not actively woven into the plans for the coast, as they lacked the authority with which to form their claims. There is a distinct 'othering' of local people in these processes, and in the case of TTT they are seen as intruders on their 'own' land. In turn, this resulted in a widening conflict with the local community whose

members have had (informal) access to the coast for many years and resented their lack of involvement in the processes of 'regeneration' taking place here.

These local residents have an in-depth local knowledge of the coastal processes that could have been incorporated within the plans. Some individuals demonstrated a clear understanding and concern for the environment, but their claims were not deemed as legitimate as those of the 'professionals'. In a study of similarly deprived areas, Lucas *et al* (2003:62) found that,

> "virtually none of the community individuals interviewed for the project had heard of either sustainable development or LA21; however, they could provide cogent arguments for the need to address the economic, social and environmental problems of their area together rather than in isolation."

Indeed, these findings are strongly reflected within the findings of this thesis. Local people, and their latent 'expert' knowledges, tend to remain on the margins of regeneration initiatives. They are not drawn into the game unless there are economic or political gains to be made.

The case of Dalton Flatts is highly illustrative of the political and economic aspects to regeneration in East Durham, and how issues of sustainability can be marginalised or easily resolved in the name of capitalism (O'Connor, 1994). Whilst the private developers in this case may have tried to portray themselves as philanthropists, they were highly motivated by economics and self interest. Conversely, the politicians in this case were motivated by a need to be seen to 'be doing something for the coalfields'. The Secretary of State's pragmatic over-turning of the Inspector's decision was based largely upon the need for coalfield regeneration (as outlined in the previous chapters). Issues of sustainability were

fairly easily resolved because they were constructed via the structures of policy, which in itself takes a fairly weak form of sustainability (Chatterton, 2002; Pearce *et al*, 1989, 1993; Atkinson, 1997; Gibbs, 1997; Gibbs *et al*, 1998). Thus the trade-off of possible increased journeys was deemed acceptable in light of the potential for job creation and improved quality of life for local people.

In addition, some of the more formal regeneration activities are being carried out for highly economic, market-led, purposes. The case of SRB5 and Parkside illustrates how the District Council had identified housing issues as a major problem for the District, yet it had experienced a number of difficulties in obtaining funding to address the problem. The opportunity of SRB5 and the interests of the private sector housing developers gave the Council the scope to attempt a regeneration initiative. A number of factors led to the controversy with the residents association, but during the focus group one of the members made a particularly salient point,

> "M2: Now if you think about it, there's a slice of the SRB gone straight away that doesn't involve us, that £2million to Beazer Leach plus the land, because we've got no access to that. So **it doesn't regenerate our lives**, and bearing in mind its got to be walled in, and whatever environmental improvements they do there, we'll get no benefit from it. So what's the benefit to us? Its not the £4.6million like they say, we're down to £2million, and its not even that." (PRA FG:42)

In this case the local people claim that they are not the 'winners' in this particular game of regeneration. Surely it is the developers who are the largest beneficiaries of this regeneration programme. Another 'loser' in this process is the 'environment', given that the un-sustainable act of demolishing and re-building remained un-addressed. The policy and funding regime may have called for an

examination of sustainable development issues (see Appendix 13) but the inherently weak and reformist approach this takes means it can be easily overshadowed.

Indeed, the current mantra of sustainable development is technocentric and inherently reformist (Adams, 1995a). It tends to fit comfortably and conveniently with a technical administration that advocates a cautious incremental approach and a steady advancement of industrialisation (Torgerson, 1995). Indeed, Chatterton (2002:559) suggests that,

> "real progress towards strong sustainable development in the region [north east of England] requires radical and wholesale changes in governance, funding and policy, rather than the incremental ones which are currently occurring."

The marginalised, resistant or alternative, discourses of sustainability and regeneration do, however, offer some potential to challenge and disrupt this dominant public discourse.

10.4 Taking Stock and Moving Forward

This section examines the key areas of contention with the theoretical underpinnings of this research. These are highlighted with reference to the theoretical and methodological problematics encountered with both ethnography and social constructionism. It should be noted that there were other theoretical and methodological problematics, such as the tensions between Grounded Theory and the enactment of research (see section 2.4 and Chapter 3), and specific fieldwork issues such as access, gatekeepers, locations of interviews being chosen by interviewee, locations of focus groups less than ideal, composition of focus

groups not determined by me, one off groups where people know each other and the dynamics of this, me as a perceived threat, not being able to obtain permission to tape, suspicion and knowing when saturation is reached, to name but a few. All of these are worthy of lengthy discussion and reflection. Yet this has been undertaken as part of the field record and theoretical memo process (see sections 3.3.3, 3.4.2 and Table 3.6) and made transparent throughout the writing of the thesis (see section 3.5). Thus the aim here is to focus upon the elements of ethnography and social constructionist theory that proved problematic and highlight how my management of such problematics has led to further contributions to knowledge and theory in these respective fields.

10.4.1 Performances of Ethnography

The cultural shift in ethnography, which calls for greater attention to inter-subjectivity, was highlighted in sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.3. This shift has been characterised by a move from participant observation to observation of participation, such that writings in ethnographic research have become more concerned with presenting the 'self' and 'other' within a single narrative (Tedlock, 1991). This section addresses the problematics that I encountered with ethnography and the production of this 'single' narrative. The overwhelming majority of 'fieldwork' issues that occurred, during my time 'in the field', derived from the fact that I lived within the area that I was conducting researching upon. I was aware that my 'situatedness' would be problematic before I went into 'the field'. During my first year I wrote a methodology paper which highlighted my concerns,

> "who and what situations am I observing in this research project and for how long? In an extreme scenario I could spend the next three years documenting my participant observation of the discursive practices of everyone I meet in my everyday life; clearly this isn't practical." (Smith, 1999:9)

From the outset I had problems (was naïve) with the performance of ethnography. Quite how these problems would shape and mould the research was something I underestimated. The 'rawness' of that quite painful, uncomfortable, yet sometimes pleasurable, experience we can encounter in the field was awaiting me. The text books had advised me on the correct methodology and provided guidelines for methods, but I came to appreciate that each fieldwork experience is unique and bounded by the frames within which the 'experience' takes place. The aim of this section, then, is to highlight some of these painful fieldwork experiences in order to explore some practical, theoretical and ethical considerations that shaped the fieldwork and the 'writing' processes.

Most descriptions of the ethnographer imply someone who is as an 'outsider', who can observe 'insiders' (Agar, 1986). Katz (1994) suggests that most ethnographers will displace themselves in order to 'see' the exotic, as routines at home may be difficult to discern. Yet I had not displaced myself to conduct my fieldwork. I lived in the East Durham area and I was an 'insider' to my research. Zavella (1996) suggests that insiders are more likely to be sensitive to the nuances of language use; less likely to be duped by informants who create performances for their own purposes; have knowledge of the complexity of internal variation; and find it easier to gain access, asking appropriate questions to a group. She also

notes that being an insider can create a particular set of personal and ethical dilemmas for the researcher and carries with it a responsibility to be accountable to the community being studied, representing information in a sympathetic manner and sharing the knowledge generated with them. Indeed, it is with these issues that I encountered the most problems.

Inside Out

> When do I stop being me and become the researcher?
> If I'm researching in the area I live in how do I (or should I) disengage from the research?
> How do I present a picture of where I live without it being simply 'my story' alone?

As the 'fieldwork' progressed I began to feel 'uncomfortable' and I posed the above questions (in my field record). I became very aware of my 'self' as a performer acting out different roles in different parts of the 'field', at 'home' or 'university'; often forgetting which role I was playing. I felt a need to be reflexive about these changing roles and how the 'researched' themselves were having an impact upon the way I performed and the questions I pursued.

In the case of Dalton Flatts, for instance, the site was literally across the road from my house, and adjacent to my nearest village (which I frequent to do my shopping). The DFAG were passionate for the cause (of campaigning for the development) and when talking to the group I found it hard not to empathise and agree with their quest. As a person living in East Durham I would welcome that kind of development myself. Before undertaking the research I had signed their petition. I felt uncomfortable being simultaneously an 'insider' / an 'outsider' and

'in the field' / 'out of the field'. I played my performance as the insider well and became accepted as that 'lass who lives over the way who's doing research on this'. My 'insidedness' did allow me easier access and the chance for informal meetings in the pub with members of the action group. However, it also led to attempts to draw me into the action, get me to find out information. There was an assumption that I would be 'for' the development too. Yet I tried to remain impartial, never sharing my feelings. But there were many times when people tried to ascertain my 'allegiances' ("So, are you for the development?") and viewed me with suspicion when I avoided answering ("oh, you're one of these who sits on the fence are you?"). In addition, interviewees often assumed my residency meant that I sided with the DFAG. Sometimes this framed responses during interviews. One interviewee (who was against the development), at the end of an interview, asked whether or not he had changed my mind (to be against the development), when I had not offered my opinion at any point.

In addition, I was often attributed with a lot more power and knowledge than I actually had. The DFAG felt they were the last to know anything, and that I would somehow hear the inquiry decision first. I was often stopped in the local shop and asked if I had 'heard anything'. There were occasions when DFAG tried to steer my research by suggesting to me that there were questions I should be asking of the 'other' side. The group implied that it would be interested in the findings, to use as part of its campaign. I made it clear that I would be unable to disclose such information - just as I would not disclose what they had told me with other interviewees. Yet I did find myself on occasions using some of the

questions the group had suggested. I also felt that research participants assumed that my research would 'unearth' 'facts' that would be advantageous to the decision - as if I was some sort of independent reviewer (investigative journalist). I experienced similar problems throughout the course of the fieldwork, and remained unsure of how I should perform or respond to calls for action. These calls to action raised a set of ethical questions.

What have you done for us?

> How, or should, we give something back to those we research?
> What happens when they demand it?
> In what format would I give something back?

Hammersley & Atkinson (1995) suggest that ethical considerations in ethnography are typical of those we face in everyday life, for instance how much information to divulge on a subject can be an issue at any time. They suggest that all the ethnographer can do is take due note of the ethical aspects of their work and make the best judgements possible given the circumstances, in the knowledge that they will have to live with the consequences. In the enactment of ethnography, however, this is not an easy task. There were moments in my research which were highly uncomfortable and embarrassing. The PRA, for instance, made me feel very uncomfortable when it tried to recruit me to conduct an 'independent' estate survey (see section 6.5.3). I tried to explain that I could not do this, mainly because I doubted the Council would accept my work as independent, but also because there was a need for me to try and remain 'impartial' whilst studying the issues in order to gain access to other actors. I distinctly remember the time I was sat in the living room of the group's secretary,

surrounded by numerous members of the PRA. One of the group members grilled me as to why I would not undertake the survey and finally, exasperated, he asked 'well what **can** you do for us then?' And indeed there was only so far I could get away with not 'participating' before I looked suspicious to the PRA. I found that I had to, at least, appear highly sympathetic and offer advice and information where I could. This situation was heightened by the fact that quite a lot of my mother's friends live on the estate, and I actually *wanted* to help. I felt an affinity with the group and a sadness that PRA found it so hard to make itself heard.

On other occasions potential research participants were reluctant to give up their time as they perceived no gain from doing so. One community development worker asked me what the community would get out of her giving me an hour of her time, an hour when she could be more gainfully employed in working for them; she asked me would they be able to have access to my work. She noted that they are sick of being researched, that coalfields have been over researched and nothing ever happens, "**you'll** be alright- you'll get your PhD out of it. But what will **we** get?" Indeed, her comments reflected the problems of research attrition, or fatigue as Duncan & Thomas (2000) suggest, in community regeneration programmes, as noted above.

'Insider' researchers face a particular set of personal and ethical dilemmas, and often find themselves having to negotiate their status with those being researched, ultimately being (or feeling) accountable to them (Zavella, 1996; Clifford, 1986). There are distinct difficulties involved with conducting research in an area that one also lives in, especially if using one's 'insider' status to facilitate access rather

than maintaining an 'outsider' status. The issues turn upon the binarisms between 'inside'/'outside', 'us'/'them', and 'in the field'/'outside the field'. These are the sorts of binarisms that have traditionally structured ethnographic research and are the nexus at which I have encountered theoretical and methodological problematics. Feminist researchers, such as Lal (1996) and Zavella (1996), have attempted to destabilise these binarisms in order to embrace the 'messiness of selves' (Bennett,1998) and to explore, what Crossley (1996) terms, an 'interworld' and Katz (1992) 'a space of betweeness'. By accepting the blurring of boundaries around these dualisms, we can construct an ethnography which is as much about 'us' as it is about 'them'.

Fieldwork in Crossley's 'interworld' is about getting to grips with the issue that there is no 'us' or 'them', that the 'field' is neither 'out there' nor 'in here'. Lal (1996) suggests that there is no easy or comfortable in-between location from which to transcend these dualisms. There is a need, however, to create a space between where similarity and difference can be explored in an ongoing reflexive process (Herbert, 2000; Katz, 1992). Thus participant observation becomes a process of slipping between participating, observing, immersing and distancing (Bennett, 1998), with the need to remember to interpret and analyse rather than merely describe. Katz (1992) suggests that by traversing the borders of these binarisms the ethnographic account that emerges should be full of different voices, more multivocal. Mascarenhas-Keyes (1987) points to the need for 'insider' researchers to transcend the limitations of *a priori* ascribed positions. Then it is possible to present an account that is generated between the researcher (with their

influences and motivations such as personal, family, friends, peers, supervisors etc.) and the researched (with their respective influences and motivations).

Hence in my 'written' accounts, this thesis and any other publications, I do not deny that I have been influenced by the demands of the researched (Mascarenhas-Keyes, 1987). By producing this reflexive section, I am embracing the notion that writing is a product of a process in which the researched and researcher should be highly visible. But I am also aware of the arrogance of my research (Katz, 1994), in that I have defined the issues to study (it is **MY** PhD after all) but 'others' have participated, probably hoping to get something out of it, and we have shaped the process and product together. Yet my writing is ultimately going to be aimed at an academic audience and largely benefits my career development (Zavella, 1996). Clifford (1986) suggests that all ethnographic writings are partial truths, fictions that are fashioned or made, and that the writing and reading of such fictions is ultimately out of the control of either the author or the researched community. In some ways I hold out little hope that my work will 'make a difference' to the lives of those I research to any great extent. I do not really foresee an improved quality of life for the communities of East Durham as a result of my thesis, yet I am sure this is what some of the people I have worked with over the course of the research had hoped for and why they have asked to see my work when I'm finished. But I still have not resolved how I would present this information to them, as a PhD thesis is not the most interesting of formats for feeding back information on research. However, I do feel that I should '**give something back**' for personal and ethical reasons associated with my

positionality.

By self reflexively addressing practical, ethical and theoretical issues of the research experience, it has been possible to examine how some of the most uncomfortable moments of the research experience can bring even more depth to the final product - the thesis, other writings and the process itself. I have found that methodology is a process. It is not linear, we go out thinking we are going to do one thing but discover that it might not be possible. Therefore we need to change the approach, keeping the same theoretical framework and ultimately being able to justify our methods. There is a need to remain flexible in our ethnographic endeavours (Lal, 1996) as it may well be that the changes we make that provide us with a more vivid account of the research we set out to do.

10.4.2 Limits to Constructionism

> "**Of course** knowledge and social phenomena are socially constructed." (Sayer, 1997:467 original emphasis)

Throughout the processes involved with the production of this thesis, a number of critical issues surrounding the theoretical stance of social constructionism have come to the fore. In Chapter 2 the general critiques of the concept were outlined, namely, social constructionism's "continuum of constructionist epistemology" and lack of an overall coherent doctrine (Turner & Wainwright, 2003); its relativist pretensions; unnecessary conceptual inflation; and its inability to deal with embodiment and materiality. Here I would like to expand upon these critiques in light of the work conducted throughout this research process. In a sense my aim is similar to that of Nightingale & Cromby's (1999) edited collection- *Social*

constructionist psychology: a critical analysis of theory and practice - I wish to demonstrate how an evolved constructionist agenda can creatively explore new ground (Parker, 1999). Such an evolved agenda moves our understandings of text and discourse beyond language and embraces the external phenomena which can influence our interpretations that are, as Sayer (1997) notes in the quote above, socially constructed.

Within my explorations of sustainability and regeneration in East Durham, I have been wary of a slip into relativism. Murphy (2002) illustrates the issue of relativism well with his focus upon the 'social construction of nature' and Gidden's (1991) contention that nature has come to an end and is no longer external to human knowledge, such that it is socially constructed. Murphy contends that,

> "Although the meaning given to dynamics of nature by humans is socially constructed, those dynamics cannot be reduced to meanings and have an autonomy of their own, asserting their effects on humans and their social constructions regardless of the meanings humans assign them." (Murphy, 2002:317)

Indeed, nature can bite back, it has autonomous processes and independent dynamics. It can live outside of discourse- it has its own agency. This extra-discursivity needs to be addressed.

A 'strong' social constructionist agenda[v] which focuses upon discourse alone can prove highly problematic. It leaves little space for embodiment, materiality or power, as outlined in section 2.2. For instance, Thrift's work on non-representational theory has been influential in challenging the hegemonic status of

discourse in social constructionist agendas (Knox, 2003; Thrift, 1997; Thrift & Dewsbury, 2000). We have been encouraged to examine those practices which are difficult, if not impossible, to talk or write about. These practices, given their illusive descriptions, may not be wholly *governed* by discourse. 'Things' can, and will, exist outside of discourse and conceptions. There are residually real 'things' that have their own agency, such as nature, a table, a chair, a body, a piece of land and the time-space continuum (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999; Velody & Williams 1998). Thus a wholly discursive social constructionism cannot adequately deal with these 'things': the residually real. By embracing issues of materiality and performativity we create new possibilities for analysing the transformational nature of social relations and joint practices (Burkitt, 1999).

This thesis is highly 'peopled' and full of natural 'artefacts', all of which have their own agency and operate within a set of practices that they jointly shape and are shaped by. I have been acutely aware of the limitations of a social constructionist theory that does not address issues of materiality. How, for instance, can I explain or interpret the occasions when people put their bodies where their mouths might be? I refer to times when actions might speak louder than words- local supporters of the Dalton Flatts development boarding a coach and taking their 'resistance' to the County Council in Durham in the form of a march. Or the staging of events such as a balloon release (see Plate 10.2) - these balloons essentially *say nothing* (they have no text, no words) but are a *scripted,* signifying and enacting (Butler, 1995), part of a wider performance which demonstrates the level, and nature, of local support for the development to the public inquiry inspector. I contend that

this thesis provides a significant body of empirical evidence with which to explore issues of (extra) discursivity within situated contexts. The previous sections have demonstrated that I have been enabled to highlight issues of social power and legitimacy. To a larger extent the realist dead end has been transcended (Demeritt, 1998) with the re-figuring of actants (human and non-human) within a focus upon powerful and productive practices (performances) in (and out-with) the regeneration practices and performances operating in East Durham. By engaging with theories of performativity and non-representation; acknowledging the agencies of myself, the 'researched', and artefacts (things); providing a multi-vocal account, with the help of a re-visioned ethnography (see sections 3.2.1 and 10.3); and remaining highly reflexive, transparent and open to inter-subjectivity I have found a creative means of embedding the analysis of discourse in an account of practice and moving understandings of textuality beyond language (Parker, 1999). Yet, there are still further limitations to the constructionist agenda I wish to address.

Recently, after a presentation of my research findings[vi], I was asked how I can claim that my thesis is anything more than a 'social construction in itself'. My response was that I could not, and indeed, would not make such a claim. As Sayer (1997:467) suggests 'of course' my work is socially constructed, and the conceptual understandings of regeneration and sustainability that I demonstrate within this thesis can and will change. They, themselves, will be re-conceptualised and ultimately supplement, rather than displace, those I have 'identified' (via my social constructions of the world). Indeed, an interesting aspect of further

research in this case would be an examination of how my interpretations, this thesis and products of it, play a part in further conceptualisations and performances of regeneration and sustainability in East Durham.

Whilst the there may be limits to constructionism, the theoretical underpinnings have provided a solid grounding with which to highlight the social power and legitimacy of regeneration and sustainability. Although, Turner suggests that,

> "Reconstructing the paths by which a widely accepted classification emerged, with attention to the special circumstances under which they developed, may serve a constructive purpose. But at some point the machinery of constructionism ceases to contribute much to the task. We can tell these stories without exoticizing.....When we can tell them better in a more prosaic way, by filling in facts and context, **we have reached the limits of constructionism.**" (Turner, 1998:120 emphasis added)

This thesis has provided a solid empirical account of the processes of regeneration and sustainability taking place in an area experiencing industrial decline. The social constructionist agenda has allowed an exploration of the mechanisms and structures via which conflicting discourses of the concepts emerge and are negotiated. Highlighting those that become hegemonic and/ or resistant; how various actants can use the privileged discourses for their own ends (political, economic and so on); and that there are distinct winners and losers within this powerful performance. Indeed,

> "We need no nonsense accounts of the powerful and productive practices by which the truth of representations of nature are realised and produced." (Braun & Castree, 1998:170)

Thus, I would maintain that the social constructionist agenda is still powerful and can have considerable praxis, not only in terms of policy re-formulation but for re-visioned cultures of regeneration and sustainability.

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[i] The use of the term actants throughout this thesis signals the inclusion of human *and* non-humans within a series of networks, whereby the environment and other such 'natural' entities are not viewed as separate from the social characters involved in these contextual processes (see section 2.2.4).

[ii] Michael Robinson of Jacqueline Emmerson Solicitors.

[iii] New Thornley Partnership Meeting, Thornley Catholic Club, March 2000.

[iv] I met numerous individuals and groups who had the 'capacity' to participate, namely they had knowledge of local processes. For example, the ERA had considerable knowledge of nature and local coastal processes but were nor actively sort to participate in the TTT project (see section 9.2.3).

[v] This form of constructionism is also described as Neo-Kantian in Chapter 2 (see Table 2.1), and as noted in footnote 1 of chapter 2 can also be described as dark constructionism.

[vi] This presentation was given as part of the selection process for an academic post at a university in the UK.

11.1 Conclusions

Chapter 10 drew together the main themes of the thesis and provided a discussion and analysis of the key issues. The purpose of this chapter is to return to the original research questions, as outlined in section 1.3, and summarise the main findings of the thesis in light of those questions. The focus is upon summarising what the main components of regeneration practices are within East Durham, who has the legitimacy to undertake these practices, how understandings of sustainability and regeneration circulate and become embedded, and what the implications of these findings are, or might be. Thus the thesis focus upon discursive practices and how they are embedded in social relations of power and ideology is addressed. Section 11.3 provides critical comment upon the thesis' contribution to theory and knowledge within geography.

11.2 Summary of Main Findings

11.2.1 What is Regeneration?

Research Question: 1. What are the concepts and contents of regeneration policies?

Chapters 8 and 9 explored in-depth the key concepts and contents of regeneration policies and practices within East Durham. The need to provide 'hard' evidence of tangible results emerged as a key factor within regeneration. Not surprisingly, the initial focus of regeneration activity during the 1990s was upon physical regeneration. Activities such as land reclamation, provision of new infrastructure, environmental improvements and housing developments, have provided numerous actors with a vast array of quantitative results, such as acres of land reclaimed or miles of road created, with which to make claims for successful regeneration. The most common theme of this sort of activity has been that of image enhancement (or even creation) in order to attract

investment to the area. Similarly, economic objectives have been very popular, and have tended to include the primary aims of attracting inward investment and creating jobs, alongside economic diversification. Once again this provided useful 'hard' outputs, such as numbers of jobs 'created', for political motives. This economic focus has, however, evolved, and is clearly still evolving, to incorporate discourses such as sustainability, joined-up practices and small-scale initiatives; issues which were explored further in Chapters 9 and 10. But with discourses firmly rooted in a desire to provide firm outputs, there has been little room for the 'softer' discourses of regeneration.

The evidence suggested that whilst the issues of physical and economic regeneration had been targeted, with varying degrees of success, some of the underlying social and cultural issues within the District had not been successfully addressed. Issues such as education, health, crime and safety, and the general cultures of dependency and social exclusion remained significant problems in the area. Set alongside wider national strategies of neighbourhood renewal, East Durham has started to receive greater attention to aspects of 'soft' regeneration. By far the largest set of regeneration discourses circulating within East Durham *during* the field investigations were those associated with notions of empowerment and capacity building. Principally, there were three distinctive sets of themes that could be discerned from these discourses. Firstly, the need to empower individuals into the employment market. Secondly, the need to encourage community involvement within regeneration in order to achieve lasting improvements; and related, the third theme, the need to empower local communities to undertake various aspects of regeneration processes.

11.2.2 Who 'Does' Regeneration?

Research Question: 2. Who are the key actors and agencies in coalfield regeneration?

Throughout the research process it became abundantly clear that a *myriad* of actors, agencies, and bodies existed within (and out-with) the regeneration processes of East Durham. This *myriad* is highly complex and far reaching, and therefore difficult to define. Chapter 7 provided a far from an exhaustive list, this would be extremely problematic to provide, but by considering these 'players' as part of a series of networks that are inter-connected, with differing scales and levels of power, then we begin to accept that there are some players that will remain illusive, and far removed from the action. The key issue has been to highlight how some of these networks (and *actants*) are employed in the regeneration performances operating in East Durham. Given the rhetorical need to 'empower' local community members, it was interesting to discover that so many tensions had occurred within the regeneration initiatives taking place.

11.2.3 Understandings of Sustainability within Regeneration

Research Questions: 3. What are the concepts of sustainability? How are they interpreted into regeneration discourse and policy?
4. How is sustainability understood within the interest groups involved in the regeneration of coalfield communities?

In an ideal world sustainability and sustainable development would operate at all levels of policy and practice. The rhetorical claims of the concepts would be incorporated within all regeneration works taking place within East Durham, from planning to policy and right down to projects on the ground. This thesis, however, illustrates that these concepts operated far from this utopian ideal. Indeed, in some cases the concepts are 'missing-in-action'. At times it was hard to find traces of sustainability where one would

have anticipated the concept appearing. Conversely, there were instances where much is made of the concept in order to ground certain actions over others. These instances were illustrated throughout Chapter 9 in the five key constructions of sustainability operating within East Durham's regeneration performances and practices. These constructions included sustainable transport and regeneration initiatives, materialisations of nature, nature conservation, the metaphorical quest for the holy grail of sustainable regeneration, the limited ways in which the concept is used throughout the evidence, and the lack of an utopian ideal for sustainability.

The accounts provided within Chapter 9 demonstrate that, often, concepts of sustainability have only been drawn upon where necessary. For instance, in funding applications, such as SRB5, or where they might serve another sort of economic purpose, such as guaranteeing the approval of planning permission for developments, in the case of Dalton Flatts. The processes employed have been highly reformist, whereby concepts of sustainability can easily be moulded to be "fit-for-purpose". The important point is that those with the ability to enact the moulding won forth and became the victors of certain discursive battles.

The empirical evidence demonstrated that a high degree of social power lay with actants who are able to utilise appropriate discursive spaces and concepts. These actants have access to the 'right' form of information in order to structure their claims, and they understand which 'rituals' they can present this information within. They are well equipped to perform (within) these 'rituals' and ultimately 'win' the discursive battles (negotiations). The circulation of discourses is highly constrained by regimes of funding and policy, with privileged discourses utilised by actors 'formally' involved in the act(s)

of regeneration (or sustainability). As a result, local community members have felt 'dis-empowered' by this (dis)junction of discourse. Yet the evidence presented in this thesis suggests that local people have a distinct lack of faith in formal institutions and tend to act in resistance to dominant hegemonic discourses that threaten their everyday lives.

Grassroots resistance was evident throughout the research. It was clear that numerous groups and individuals found it difficult to make themselves heard within the processes of regeneration and sustainability. Chapter 10 illustrated that research participants often spoke of not knowing who to contact, being passed from one person to another, with little action ever being taken, and complained that responses received were often technical in detail, there was a (dis)junction of discourse. Whilst their concerns were very real and framed by issues of sustainability and regeneration, they were not using the appropriate claims, not using the right language, to access or facilitate their demands, nor were they using the correct channels of communication. Given the general lack of involvement in regeneration projects, local community members are often unable to form a challenge to the discourses that had become hegemonic. Their space for discursive challenge remains at the local level, in residents group meetings, however they are fast learning the rules of the game and beginning to form a discursive challenge.

11.2.4 Implications of Findings.

5. What are the implications of this understanding?

Essentially the language(s) of sustainability and regeneration are *privileged* discourses. They are used within discursive settings to legitimate a host of (in)actions, they are performed through a variety of formal and informal structures. Social power tends to lie with those actors who can use the discursive spaces and concepts. This often results in a

(dis)juncture of discourse whereby those not using the privileged discourses feel dis-empowered, and sometimes adopt resistant discourses to challenge these 'normalised' discourses. Hence we find discursive battles are occurring at this (dis)juncture and it becomes clear that regeneration and sustainability are very much part of a political-economic game. A high degree of social power lies with those actors who are able to utilise the appropriate discursive spaces and concepts, and by implication the rhetoric of the concepts of sustainability and regeneration is generally not being played out in the regeneration performances taking place within East Durham - its much more of a (wider) political-economic game, with distinct 'winners' and 'losers'.

Indeed, in East Durham the evidence suggests that there is a distinct gap between the rhetoric of soft regeneration, such as community participation, and the reality of highly constrained, and overly structured, circulations of knowledge and performances of 'harder' regeneration. The rhetoric of community empowerment, for instance, is having little real impact upon the ground. Local people do not feel empowered, if anything they are dis-empowered, dis-enfranchised and generally not trustful of regeneration activities, and by wider implication the state. There are problems innately associated with involving local communities in regeneration activities, as discussed in Chapter 10, however it is evident that cultures of regeneration and sustainability operating at the national and local level do not help matters.

The operating political, economic, cultural, policy and funding structures do not facilitate the conceptual rhetoric of regeneration and sustainability. Funding and policy regimes do not foster sustainability, they merely re-enforce traditional technocentric and reformist cultures of incremental change. Nor do they provide 'space', time and resources for the

active engagement of local communities within project development. In addition, they often do not match the needs of the local level, thus projects tend to metamorphose to fit the requirements of the funding regime and find it hard to address the real needs of the locale.

Coupled with these issues of policy and funding are the generally poor efforts at joined-up working, notwithstanding government rhetoric of joined-up approaches. Central government operates policy regimes from a multitude of departments, and the recent inclusion of a regional level of governance has meant that local governance is somewhat 'messy' and conflictual. There are far too many actants vying for the same pots of money and little is being achieved on a strategic level. In addition, differing priorities, timescales and boundaries for initiatives can make regeneration initiatives complex, costly, time consuming, stressful and far from effective.

The rhetoric of sustainability and regeneration are also being misplaced within wider economic pursuits. Some of the more formal (sustainable) regeneration activities are being carried out for highly economic, market-led, purposes. This is perhaps a reflection of the cultures within which such initiatives operate. Actants are playing a game of regeneration in which the cultures are highly patriarchal, white, paternalistic, political, economic and competitive (Oatley, 1998). Within these, local knowledge(s) and need(s) tend to get neglected, thus the rhetoric of regeneration and sustainability are not being played out.

The implications of these findings suggest that a number of issues could be tackled by central Government, local governance, the key actants in regeneration and local communities. Firstly, Central Government can review the ways in which policy and

funding is delivered. Too many of the national and local initiatives which aim to regenerate communities and tackle social exclusion are still a long way from the goal of genuine partnerships and multi-agency working. A truly joined-up approach needs to start at the central level. Secondly, and linked to the first point, is that Central Government can give greater consideration to the role of local governance. There is much scope for locales to determine their own priorities and needs. Funding regimes could be administered within local governance, thus allowing the finer nuances of the local level to play a greater role in project design and implementation. Thirdly, sustainability needs to play a more central role within the wider operation of regeneration initiatives. It can no longer be annexed to the tick-box section of bidding guidance or considered as a mere after-thought, there is a distinct need for strategic integrated sustainability assessments of all policies, projects and plans. Fourthly, there is an overwhelming need to boost faith in the state and engage a sense of personal agency amongst members of the community. Bidding regimes could allow for funds to engage local communities in the bid preparation stage. Officers and local politicians working with such communities upon such bids could undergo training in community development skills. Indeed, there are a number of possibilities but the message must surely be that there is a need for radical rather than reformist changes if the rhetoric of sustainability and regeneration are going to have an impact upon the ground.

11.3 Adding to Theory and Subject Knowledge

This thesis has addressed gaps in current knowledges and understandings of the implementation of sustainable development as a policy goal, by providing a detailed empirical focus upon all elements and constructions of sustainability and sustainable development. Previously, research in this field was framed by environment and economy,

neglecting important social aspects. This has resulted in multiple gaps to our knowledges of the conflicts and negotiations between social inclusion, the environment and the economy. Papers and discussions in recent sessions at the 2003 Annual RGS-IBG conference[i] suggested that research into the mainstreaming of sustainable development within governance is still a necessity, particularly in light of the limited progress of this aim to date.

By self reflexively addressing practical, ethical and theoretical issues of the research experience, it has been possible to examine how some of the most uncomfortable moments of the research experience can enrich the final product - the thesis, other writings and the process itself. I have found that methodology is a process. It is not linear, we go out thinking we are going to do one thing but discover that it might not be possible. Therefore we need to adapt the approach, keeping the same theoretical framework and ultimately being able to justify our methods. There is a need to remain flexible in our ethnographic endeavours (Lal, 1996) as it may well be that the changes we make provide us with a more vivid account of the research we set out to do.

In addition, this thesis has demonstrated how an evolved constructionist agenda can creatively explore new ground. Such an evolved agenda moves our understandings of text and discourse beyond language, and embraces the external phenomena which can influence our interpretations that are socially constructed. A 'strong' social constructionist agenda which focuses upon discourse alone can prove highly problematic. It leaves little space for embodiment, materiality or power, and cannot adequately deal with residually real 'things', such as nature. This thesis is highly 'peopled' and full of natural 'artefacts'. I have been acutely aware of the limitations of a social constructionist

theory that does not address issues of materiality. The thesis provides a significant body of empirical evidence with which to explore issues of (extra) discursivity within situated contexts. To a larger extent the realist dead end has been transcended (Demeritt, 1998) with the re-figuring of actants within a focus upon powerful and productive practices (performances) in (and out-with) the regeneration practices and performances operating in East Durham.

Throughout this thesis I have contended that regeneration and sustainability are discursively *performed* rather than being simply represented through linguistic practice. Language has agency, it does 'things' and works to achieve outcomes. Notions of the *performative function(s) of language* have been vital, within this thesis, to an understanding of the ways in which linguistic practices are key to the constructing, shaping, moulding, resisting, blending, and asserting of regeneration and sustainability. By focusing upon the performative function(s) of discourse it has been possible to shed a considerable amount of light upon the extent to which (certain) regeneration activities and actants are(not) framed by particular discourses of sustainability.

Indeed, by engaging with theories of performativity; acknowledging the agencies of myself, the 'researched', and artefacts (things); providing a multi-vocal account, with the help of an re-visioned ethnography (see sections 3.213 and 10.3); and remaining highly reflexive, transparent and open to inter-subjectivity. I have found a creative means of embedding the analysis of discourse in an account of practice and moving understandings of textuality beyond language (Parker, 1999). The social constructionist agenda is still powerful and can have considerable praxis, not only in terms of policy re-formulation but for re-visioned cultures of regeneration and sustainability.

The need for further research in this area of study is clear. The conceptual rhetoric of both sustainability and regeneration is not being facilitated by current political, economic, policy or funding structures. At all levels of Government there is a distinct failure of joined-up working, with too many conflicting interest groups vying for recognition and too little emphasis being placed upon the radical changes needed to bring about a more inclusive, democratic and equitable society. Clearly, any future research agendas in this field can build upon the strong body of empirical evidence provided here and the emerging theoretical nuances of the social constructionist agenda suggested, to facilitate meaningful and practical research that furthers our contextual understandings of regeneration and sustainability.

[i] "Sustainable Development and the Governing of Rural and Urban Areas" session at the RGS-IBG Annual Conference September 2003, London.

Appendix 1: Sample Letter of Approach for Interviews

University of Durham

Department of Geography
Science Laboratories, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE

Telephone : (0191) 374 7065
(0191) 581 3643 (Home)
Facsimile : (0191) 374 2456

Email : A.J.Smith@durham.ac.uk

6th October 1999

Mr A.Cave
Chesterton Plc
84 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 2HG

Dear Mr Cave,

Re: Dalton Flatts Public Inquiry, May 1999

I am currently a research student at the University of Durham and as part of my research I am using the Dalton Flatts Public Inquiry as a case study. So far this has involved observing the inquiry and analysing the submitted evidence. The next stage of my research requires that I interview the main participants in the inquiry to discuss some of the issues raised in more depth.

I wonder if it would be possible to interview you at some point in November or December? The interview would take approximately one hour. I will telephone you within the coming fortnight to discuss this further. Any help you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

In addition, I am having trouble contacting your clients Matthew Fox Developments Ltd and J.J.Gallagher Developments Ltd, I wonder if you have current contacts that you could supply me with?

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Smith
Research Student

Appendix 2: Sample Interview Schedule

SRB5 bid April 1999 'Integrated Regeneration in County Durham and Darlington'

Outline the need for the project.

What are the priorities? - needy areas; economic, social or physical?; quantifiable or qualitative outputs?

How are the priorities being tackled? - polices/ projects; timescales

The bid stresses the 'new' approach- integration btw strategic and local regeneration together with effective community participation; can you expand on this?

Use of partnerships- who
why
power differentials

Why/ how to involve the community-
- who are they
- capacity building- do they need it? or do they need funds?
- empowerment- who are you empowering
- sustainability of project- lasts if community are involved?
- were they part of the bid preparation
- more generally how are they involved

The vision for the SRB project mentions 'sustainable improvements' what does this mean? Does it relate to sustainable development?

The term regeneration- what's you take on it? [managing decline vs. regen; holistic or more specific; lasting]

What would successful regeneration be?

How does the concept of sustainable development link to regeneration?
- lasting
- improved quality of life
- social 'inclusion'
- equity
- environmental issues

Does the competitive nature of bidding have an impact on the very work of the project?

Dawdon and Parkside more specifically:

housing improvements- what are the housing issues? [demand/ supply]
why approach them this way?
is this sustainable?
what about bidding guidance that asks for building re-use; recycling etc.?
is it developer led?

Environmental Enhancements- why are these a priority here?

Community development- is this about a locally-based community initiative with devolution of resources and power? Same questions as above with regards to community involvement.

Why did the conflict with the Residents Association occur?

Appendix 3: Sample Letter of Approach for Focus Groups

University of Durham

Department of Geography
Science Laboratories, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE

Telephone : (0191) 374 2462 (Secretary)
(0191) (Home)
(0771) (Mobile)
Facsimile : (0191) 374 2456

Email : A.J.Smith@durham.ac.uk

David Moor,
Wheatley Hill Partnership,
District of Easington,
Council Offices,
Seaside Lane,
Easington,
Peterlee,
Co.Durham.

Dear Mr.Moor,

I am currently a research student at the University of Durham and as part of my research I need to interview a number of community groups to gather together an idea of what regeneration, and other issues, mean to them. I was wondering whether or not it would be possible for me to come along to a meeting of the Wheatley Hill Partnership and asks some questions? This would take approximately an hour.

Would it be possible for me to come along to your next meeting, in December? This would be a great help to my research.

I would be grateful if you could contact me at your earliest possible convenience on any of the numbers listed above (I often work from home, please feel free to call me there if you like) or via email.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Smith
Research Student

Appendix 4: Focus Group Participants Proforma

University of Durham

Department of Geography
Science Laboratories, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE

Telephone : (0191) 374 7065
(0191) 5813643 (home)
Facsimile : (0191) 374 2456

Email : A.J.Smith@durham.ac.uk

Focus Group: 8th October 1999

For participants to complete:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Employment Status: _____

ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE WILL BE USED FOR MY RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY AND WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.

AMANDA SMITH

Appendix 5: Sample Focus Group Schedule

Focus Group- 8th October 1999

Explain the purpose of the group:

The idea behind me using this group interview approach for my research is so that I can get a wide range of different points of view about my topic area.

What I want to do is get you to discuss a few topics for an hour. My role is basically to be a facilitator, I'll be asking you a broad set of questions and I want to hear what each of you has to say as you discuss the answer in the group. Some of my questions may be more specific and I may need to interrupt from time to time, but basically I'm looking to get YOUR opinions.

Top of the Funnel:

To start off with I'd like to hear your opinions of what sorts of problems you think East Durham faces.

- may wish to probe: okay you've talked about a lot of problems so far, are there any you haven't discussed yet? (if one person is dominating discussion use the 'who else has some thoughts' question)

Where do you think the priorities lie in solving these problems?

- may need to probe here, reflect back some of the problems they've identified and ask which are the priorities

Middle of the Funnel

'Regeneration' is a term frequently used to describe a variety of policies and practices that take place in East Durham. What does that term mean for you?

- check breadth of meaning here- is it just economic, or are there other types of regeneration

Why should there be this focus upon regeneration?

- Could ask them is it about their future, their children's future and their children's children's future?

And what about the environment in all of this? What sort of priority should we be assigning to the environment?

Have you heard of the terms Sustainable Development and Sustainability? What do they mean to you?

This idea of 'think global, act local' or 'doing your bit for the environment" do you think that's important?

- what sort of things do you think you 'do for the environment'?

Bottom of the Funnel:

Okay moving on, I'd like for us to discuss the proposed development at Dalton Flatts, Murton. Do you know what I mean? The proposal to build a retail and leisure development there- including factory outlets, a cinema, bowling alley, hotel, restaurants, fitness centre, crèche and petrol station/ car showroom.

First of all, have all of you heard about it?

Do you think East Durham needs this sort of development?

- probe why: what sort of benefits would it bring, any negatives?

Would you use it?

- probe what they would use there, and where they currently go (don't go) for such services

How would you get there?

- probe for specifics, and perhaps generate a discussion of transport options in general

Did you know that the development has been subject to a public inquiry?

Do you know why it was called in by the secretary of state?

- if not, I should attempt to outline why- transport issue, v&v of Peterlee and Seaham, and worries about it affecting regeneration elsewhere in East Durham

What do you think about these reasons for 'calling in' the development?

- try to ensure they address all the issues

Okay finally then, thinking through all we've discussed here tonight about regeneration and ideas of sustainable development, would you grant planning permission for the development at Dalton Flatts?

Appendix 6: Sample Transcript from an Interview

AJS: I'll just start with a pretty broad question to you, what did you all think were the strengths and weaknesses of that proposal to build that development on that site?

M1: It's location, umm sort of on two main bus routes, accessible, with the slip road access they've just built for the A19. Brownfield former colliery site. Private sector investment, backing One North East. Employment for the region.

AJS: OK. What did you mean there by 'backing One North East'?

M1: Well they've got to create jobs and revitalise the North East coalfield, and just any of the derelict yards, the ship yards, the steel works and umm it's what they're after- private sector funding.

AJS: Right OK, and is that the views of everybody or?

M2: No I think the dire need for the provision of entertainment needs for youngsters the bowling alleys, the cinema, the fast food outlets, it's things like that the kids of this new age want. That's what they use, that's what they go for. We just haven't got it in East Durham. It's a big things to have.

AJS: Do you think they, do you think people from around here will be able to afford to use that kind of facility?

ALL: [talk at once in agreement]

M2: I mean you go past the new one umm at Sunderland there near Grangetown, I mean they're of the same economic type of us in a way, they've lost the shipyards and all the infrastructure, and that place is absolutely crammed from morning to night time if you look at it. I can't see any reason why we can't have the same at Dalton Flatts.

AJS: OK

M3: I think it will bring inward investment with it as well. It will encourage people to visit the Dalton Flatts site from outside the area. Especially the factory shop.

Appendix 7: Codes Used in Interpretation.

Below is a list (and description) of all the codes used during the interpretation of evidence. These codes were used with transcripts, observations, and documents. In total 107 codes were used. The brackets next to each code label indicate the instances of each code, for instance, throughout the evidence I felt it necessary to label 60 segments of text in reference to the code circulation of knowledge.

ACT- Aged Popn {6-0}~
"The elderly, the aged etc"
ACT- British Coal {1-0}
ACT- CDW {28-0}~
"ACT- Community Development Workers"
ACT- Central Govt {75-0}~
"All references to central government but not necessarily bodies such as the Countryside Agency"
ACT- Coalfield Taskforce {12-0}~
"All references to the Taskforce or the report (also need code SOL for report)"
ACT- Community Partnerships {92-0}~
"These are the community groups that 'do' regeneration, and include the SRI steering groups"
ACT- Consultants {10-0}~
"Consultants that work on the public inquiry etc."
ACT- council officers/ project officers {78-0}~
"All those people who work at the coalface of delivery"
ACT- Countryside Agency {8-0}
ACT- DAFG {2-0}
"Dalton Flatts Action Group"
ACT- DCC {54-0}~
"Durham County Council"
ACT- Disabled {2-0}
ACT- Durham CDA {23-0}~
"Durham Co-operative Development Agency"
ACT- East Durham Business Club {1-0}
ACT- ED Consortium {9-0}~
"East Durham Villages Consortium"
ACT- EDC {216-0}~
"The District Council of Easington"
ACT- EDTaskforce {32-0}~
"East Durham Taskforce"
ACT- English Nature {3-0}
ACT- Environment Agency {6-0}
ACT- Europe {13-0}
ACT- Fishermen {1-0}
ACT- Groundwork {13-0}
ACT- Hollywood ! {5-0}~
"References to films or famous people"
ACT- Housing Associations {13-0}
ACT- local communities {113-0}~
"references to the local communities, i.e. not the community partnerships, OR the general public"
ACT- local councilors {39-0}
ACT- Lottery Commission {2-0}
ACT- Media {5-0}~
"TV, radio, newspapers- films covered under Hollywood"
ACT- Millennium Commission {3-0}~
"references to Millennium Commission"
ACT- miners/ mining communities {21-0}~
"references either to miners or mining communities in general"
ACT- Myriad {23-0}~
"where people note that there are many people in the regeneration processes"
ACT- National Trust {14-0}
ACT- Northern Arts {1-0}

ACT- Northern Electric {1-0}
ACT- Northern Training {2-0}
ACT- Northumbrian Water {3-0}
ACT- ombudsman (Local Govt) {6-0}
ACT- OneNorth East {9-0}
ACT- Parish Council {9-0}~
"references to the Parish council as a body rather than councilors"
ACT- Planning Inspectors {6-0}
ACT- Police {3-0}
ACT- PR agents {2-0}
ACT- Private Landlords {8-0}~
"the absentee variety!"
ACT- private sector {65-0}~
"Some references to private developers as philanthropists"
ACT- Regional Government {8-0}~
"Government office for the North East"
ACT- Residents Associations {14-0}~
"References to RAs"
ACT- Rural Community Council {1-0}
ACT- Seaham Environmental Assoc {2-0}
ACT- Seaham Harbour Dock Company {4-0}
ACT- Secretary of State for Environment {6-0}
ACT- Solicitor {3-0}
ACT- Tony Blair PM {1-0}
ACT- Tourists {1-0}
ACT- Town Council {1-0}
ACT- Voluntary Sector {24-0}
ACT- volunteers {1-0}
ACT- Wildlife Trust {1-0}
ACT- Youth Workers {10-0}
ACT- YOUTHS {58-0}~
"All references to young people and the 'youth problem'. and also children"
Circulation of Knowledge {60-0}~
"This includes access to knowledge; being fed information and so on."
Contextual Issues of Place {145-0}~
"All descriptions of the places under study"
Disjuncture of Discourse {20-0}~
"This refers to times when actors are using similar ideas but they are not being 'heard'/ actioned upon because they are not the 'hegemonic' discourse. Also refers to the opposite: when actors are clearly using a juncture of discourse to get what they want, i.e. in bids"
REG- Coalfields {42-0}~
"All calls made upon the regeneration needs of coalfields"
REG- Dalton Flatts {44-0}~
"Mentioning of Dalton Flatts, code not to be used in DF family!"
REG- Economy {130-0}~
"regeneration talked about in terms of economic development, inward investment, tourism and so on"
REG- Education {72-0}~
"This refers to all mentions of need for education or training. Also initiatives that focus on these topics. And the ways in which people are 're-skilled'/transformed to useful beings"
REG- Empowerment {330-0}~
"This refers to any form of community involvement, attempts to become involved and attempts to involve the community. In addition to all mentions of capacity building, ranging from help to fill in forms to training committee members to giving someone confidence. Also references to 'transforming people' so that they are capable of participating in regeneration"
REG- Funding {211-0}~
"Refers to any funding or bidding issues, particularly those that are restrictive of certain regeneration activities e.g. empowerment"

REG- Health {15-0}~
"All references to health initiatives in the name of regeneration"
REG- Housing {136-0}~
"this refers to housing as part of regeneration but also when housing is described as a problem for the area"
REG- Infrastructure {7-0}~
"References to the regeneration focus upon infrastructure"
REG- Initiatives {66-0}~
"references to initiatives other than the main case studies"
REG- Interps/Defs {156-0}~
"when people provide their interpretations on regeneration (usually prompted by myself)"
REG- job creation {85-0}~
"All references to job creation, including the need for jobs, and claims to have created jobs, or spin-off jobs"
REG- outputs/ outcomes {21-0}~
"when people make the distinction btw outputs and outcomes"
REG- Partnerships {71-0}~
"when partnerships are referred to"
REG- physical {84-0}~
"This can be references to any form of physical regeneration, such as 'face-lifts' for shop fronts, of places in general, of sites, land reclamation; and all calls for any of the above"
REG- Power {71-0}~
"Influencing regeneration, claiming to have power or to be powerless"
REG- Priorities {201-0}~
"Includes priorities as outlined by actors and problems that need to be addressed."
REG- Scale {29-0}~
"Can refer to flagship projects or when discussing small scale projects"
REG- Social {32-0}~
"discussions of a range of social regeneration claims"
REG- Social Exclusion {11-0}~
"when people specifically use this term"
REG- SRB {112-0}~
"all references to SRB, either at Parkside or other rounds of SRB and processes"
REG- SRIs {19-0}~
"all references to the SRIs but not within the SRI family"
REG- Sustainable {54-0}~
"references to regeneration AND sustainability"
REG- TTT {28-0}~
"references to TTT but not in TTT family"
REG- Uneven {96-0}~
"Can refer to East/ West of A19 issue or any other claims of patterns to uneven regeneration occurrences?"
RES- positionality/performances {68-0}~
"Relates to all issues of my positionality or the roles I adopt (or asked to adopt) during the fieldwork. May also refer to the positionality and performances of the interviewees"
RES- research attrition {17-0}~
"Problems of researching in areas that have already received a large focus"
SPACES {15-0}~
"What are the settings for 'discussions of regeneration or sustainability'?"
Structures of Legitimacy {133-0}~
"The various means by which actors legitimate their claims- such as government policy and so on."
SUS- Brundtland {2-0}~
"Does not include my use of it. That's given."
SUS- Community {14-0}~
"Uses of this term?"
SUS- Economy {34-0}~
"References to creating a sustainable economy, or maintaining a local economy- keeping money in sustainable economic activities, such as buying local"

SUS- Environmental Issues {88-0}~
"Includes all mentions of environmental issues, whether directly mentioning sus or not. Like pollution, waste management, recycling?"
SUS- Initiatives {32-0}~
"references to sus initiatives other than those in case studies"
SUS- Interps/ Definitions {119-0}~
"when people provide their interps of sus"
SUS- LA21 {22-0}~
"references to LA21"
SUS- Land Use Planning {62-0}~
"references to sustainability in terms of land use planning issues, such as not building out of town, etc."
SUS- lasting {47-0}~
"Use of the terms sustainable/sustainability to refer to maintain/ lasting"
SUS- location {6-0}
SUS- missing {17-0}~
"No mention of sustainability where it would be expected OR no clear understanding of sustainability"
SUS- Practices {9-0}~
"whether the practices can be classed as sustainable or highly unsustainable"
SUS- Priorities {29-0}~
"when there claims to priorities for or against sus"
SUS- Resource {164-0}~
"References to the sustainable uses of resources, whatever they may be. This code can also include conservation, biodiversity and habitat creation. It can also refer to access to resources such as the beach"
SUS-Trans {66-0}~
"All references to sustainability and transport; including cutting car trips, shortening journeys etc"
TIME {158-0}~
"All issues to incorporate time scales such as regeneration, sustainability and so on"

Appendix 8: The Coding Process

Chapter 3 section 3.4 outlines the framework for the overall interpretation process. This Appendix provides a transparent account of the coding process, based upon Strauss and Corbin (1990).

Open Coding

Stage One: all transcripts including fieldnotes and relevant sections of text in documents were open coded. This process started with transcripts for DF. Each transcript is taken in turn and each line was interrogated. This open coding generated over 1200 codes.

Stage Two: all codes were added to a large sheet of paper and 'overlapping' codes were condensed (e.g. open coding may have generated several codes to describe the colliery closures). Theoretical memos were made by interrogating each code on the sheet, for example:

need - perhaps not used in conjunction with regeneration, but clearly linked, were a set of discourses about need - supplying a need, justifying a need, claiming need, quantifying need, personal need, political need, industrial need, need for regeneration, need to secure investment/ development and also demand/ supply issues.

These memos were then used to consider the properties and dimensional range of the codes. On the large sheet similar codes and themes were drawn together using a system of colours (for example descriptions of place were all coloured yellow). By doing this an overall framework of codes and sub-codes emerged (for example code: contextual issue of place and sub-code: eyesore).

Stage Three: codes were noted at the top of a plain piece of paper (seven codes are used: discourses of sustainability, discourses of regeneration, actors, contextual issues of place, performances/practices and other). Sub-codes were then assigned to each

sheet. These codes and sub-codes were further interrogated and condensed, using theoretical memos, to produce a set of codes and sub-codes with which to axial code.

Axial Coding

At this stage six codes existed and numerous sub-codes. The codes were: structures of legitimacy, discourses of sustainability, discourses of regeneration, actors, contextual issues of place and performances/ practices. These were entered into Atlas.ti. This was done by taking each piece of evidence placed in Atlas.ti and assigning a code/ sub-code to sections of text. At this stage the open coding process was revisited. The data was put back together in new ways by making connections between codes and their sub-codes, for example code: reg = all discourses of regeneration and sub-code: reg-econ = regeneration talked about in terms of economic development, inward investment, tourism and so on.

Selective Coding

At this point the codes were related to each other at a dimensional level to validate relationships. Atlas.ti made this process easy. Generating an output file of Boolean searches allowed further analysis and interrogation of codes. For instance, all instances of the sub-code sus-trans (sustainability discourses and transport) were gathered together for analysis. Further changes to codes and sub-codes were made at this stage to obtain the codes listed in Appendix 7. These changes were, however, minimal, which suggested that a stability to theory had been achieved.

Appendix 9: Single Regeneration Bidding Guidance (Round 5): Annex E - Involvement of the community in SRB schemes

INTRODUCTION

1. The Government places great importance on involving local people in regeneration activities. Community involvement enhances the effectiveness of regeneration programmes by encouraging better decision making, fostering more effective programme delivery, and helping to ensure the benefits of regeneration programmes are sustained over the long term. The Government therefore intends that local communities should be directly involved in the planned regeneration activities, both in the preparation and implementation of bids.

2. It is expected that the community, including ethnic minority communities, the voluntary sector and faith communities, will be part of the local partnership bidding for regeneration funds. This can be achieved through community representatives sitting on partnership boards and by creating representative structures to allow the community viewpoint to be heard. The mere existence of community representatives in partnerships is not enough, however, to ensure that the community has a significant say in decisions.

CAPACITY BUILDING

3. In contrast to community representatives, other partners are likely to have greater back-up resources than the community. If the community is to make a full and equal contribution to the strategic management of the partnership and its programmes, then the partnership will need to ensure that its procedures assist community representatives to undertake their role effectively. This may include providing specific support to build the capacity of the community through, for example, training for representatives; providing support workers to help community groups to develop skills; or access to administrative resources, such as office equipment.

4. The effective commitment of partnerships to community capacity building is a criterion for SRB support. Most bids should have capacity building as a key objective. Where this is the case, partnerships will be expected to devote much of their first year activities and resources to capacity building to ensure the proper engagement of local communities. In addition to the support for SRB Administration Costs, up to a further 10% of SRB resources can be devoted to capacity building projects over the life-time of a successful bid, from within the total amount of approved grant. The bid should include costed proposals for capacity building, which must be agreed with the partnership's community representative(s).

Source (DETR, 1998h).

Appendix 10: Slides Used During Presentations Made by Members of Easington District Council[1]

Progress: land reclamation

- Reclaiming former Dawdon Colliery and Foxcover £35 million
- Factory building at Bracknell Park Peterlee £25 million
- Imminent development of factory space on Dawdon and Foxcover EZ sites
- EZ site at Seaham Grange now fully developed at total cost of £8.7 million
- Vane Tempest colliery site Seaham- outline planning for 500 quality homes
- Reclamation of Seaham Colliery to follow
- Reclaiming Easington Colliery for recreational use, including access to beach £3million
- Outline scheme for leisure/ retail use at Dalton Flatts, near Murton. Potential investment to bring 1,150 jobs ....£36 million
- Impact of Coalfield Task Force proposals helped give force to land reclamation e.g. Vane Tempest, Hawthorn Cokeworks, Thomas Bros. site

Total £1001 million

Progress: new infrastructure

- New link road from A19 to Foxcover & Dawdon EZ sites £10million
- Renovation of Seaham Hall to convert in into a 5 Star^{+} hotel including 20^{+} executive suites £6.2 million
- Investment in redeveloping Peterlee town centre, to include bus terminal, more retail and leisure facilities and more car parking £25 million
- Development of Hotel, Pub, Restaurant and brewery tours complex at Castle Eden £2^{+} million

Total £68 million

Progress: environmental improvements

- Upgrade of Seaham promenade and North Terrace Green, Seaham £1^{+} million
- Facelift of shopping area in Seaham £600,000
- Car park improvements, Church Street £150,000
- 'Turning the Tide' project over five years to clean up the coastline £10 million
- Northumbrian Water £28 million improvement works along the coastline + £2.5 million additional works inland £30.5 million

Total £42 million

Progress: income generation projects

- Sale of Council's Industrial units has generated approx. £3.8 million
- In SRI villages 'For every £1 of district council money spent, the Economic Development Team are levering in an additional £5 in grant-aid'
- Sale of land at Peterlee Leisure Centre potential £1.2 million
- SRB1- split between Seaham and Murton £13 million
- From European Programmes ERDF/ESF/RECHAR £23.5 million
- SRB5 - Dawdon Ward at Seaham housing and environmental improvements £20 million

To date, the team is involved in projects and investments with a value of approximately £300+ million

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[1] The presentations were for visitors to the District from Poland, in November 1999, and for a public meeting about progress on the Dalton Flatts development held at the Victoria Club, Murton in March 2000. This appendix is a reproduction of the slides used.

Appendix 11: Types of Initiatives Run by Community Partnerships in East Durham

Many of the village community partnerships have set up community facilities such as the following:

a) Thornley partnership established a multi-purpose resource centre for,

"F1: Training, youth provision, a hall for: Karate, line dancing,
F2: And a community catering business"

and they hope to employ their own community development worker. One of the focus group members noted that they want the centre primarily:

"M1: to give the youths something to do, to get them off the streets"

They have also organised other youth orientated activities,

"F3: The thing that we've done...we've got a play area. We got a Lottery grant and we involved everybody in the area and all the children were involved, and that play area has been there for two years and there's been no vandalism – there's not even one pen mark on that play area. So to say that the kids have been involved – they look after it.
F5: They've got a pride in it. **They've** achieved it themselves."

b) Shotton partnership have organised youth work,

"F2: We've got two youth workers that are doing two sessions a week for two hours, Tuesday and a Friday.....Outreach- a modern drop-in centre kind of thing, and go to the community centre anytime and discuss problems and things like that, maybe find out what they want and try and get it or we can try and get it"

The group has also established an IT centre;

"F2: Well, we've got an IT Resource Centre- 10 PCs all Internet connected which we thought there was a need for in Shotton. Hopefully, to bring jobs. You know for people to come in and do courses, learn skills to get jobs outside. Its in its early stages, which is like building a rapport with the community.
AS: And you also employed someone?
F2: We have employed a co-ordinator, a manager.
AS: So is this a community business?
F1: Not a business
F2: No (laughing)
F3: We're a partnership.
M1: Just to create something for the village, to try and get some of them employed. Some people will not go to college to learn computers. So we've brought the computers to them
F2: And then you're saving on bus fares.
F1: Most people are just frightened computers to start with, so they can drop in here anytime, and just a play about. You know, a lot of them are frightened to touch one, but this is just like a link to touch them first, play around, and then they might think oh this is quite good, I wouldn't mind having a course on this, and then they can sign here to do a course – they don't have to go out. They sign here, then we get the course, and then they come here and do the courses. All on their doorstep for them."

c) **Easington Colliery SRI** partnership has established a resource centre which the group felt has,

> "vested a community spirit here. There's coffee mornings held in here [the resource centre] where people come in and people talk, and you get back to the more or less, not quite the old community, but you're getting where people are meeting each other. Before there wasn't...there was nothing down here but as I said the pub at the bottom."

d) In **Trimdon** the partnership has established a community shop, where they buy and sell second hand goods, particularly toys, and provide a range of basic food stuffs. They have undertaken this enterprise because there was previously no local shop.

Appendix 12: Extracts from fieldnotes taken during a Meeting of the Dawdon Private Sector Renewal Steering Group, at Dawdon Welfare Hall, April 2000

[my views-noted in brackets]

A Public Sector Officer- in Housing (PO-H) asks if it would be worth having a questionnaire distributed through doors on the basis of the consultants report (into the current state of housing quality), but notes that this would probably result in a call for improvements **not** demolition. One of the landlords suggests an open day (this is what happened in Sunderland - where he has other houses). The PO-H says they've done this in the past but they've usually waited until they have the steering plan first, not go in with a blank page.
[Throughout this discussion I'm struck by the fact that they just don't have a clue *how* to involve the residents!!]

.....

One of the landlords notes that they are really only investors in the area, it's the people who live here whose views need to be taken. There's agreement that the consultation needs to be delicate / sensitive. The council officers and the local councillor present seem keen to avoid using the word "demolition" in any consultation process **[hardly clear and transparent then?].**

.....

They discuss whether or not other groups should be included, and the local councillor mentions, yet again, the need to keep the Residents Association on board [referring of course to the issues with Parkside RA]. They all seem to suggest that there are no other groups to consult or get involved - **[again I'm scared by their efforts and ideas on community consultation]**

Appendix 13: Single Regeneration Budget Bidding Guidance: A Guide for Partnerships ANNEX B: Sustainable development

1. Sustainable development is a very simple idea. The Government's consultation paper, issued in February 1998 said that sustainable development "is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come.".

2 To achieve this, sustainable development is concerned with achieving economic growth, in the form of higher living standards, while protecting and where possible enhancing the environment - not just for its own sake but because a damaged environment will sooner or later hold back economic growth and lower the quality of life - and making sure that these economic and environmental benefits are available to everyone, not just a privileged few.

3. The Government's vision of sustainable development is based on four broad objectives:

social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;

effective protection of the environment;

prudent use of natural resources; and

maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

4. Sustainable development involves thinking broadly about objectives and about the effects of what we do. Sometimes it is relatively easy to see how to bring it about - for example, through the use of energy efficiency measures and by changing the way in which we use energy in the home, we can enable people to have warmer and more comfortable homes while still reducing the amount of money that people need to spend on heating and at the same time cut pollution and resource use. In other cases, choices may be needed about relative priorities.

5. The contribution of regeneration proposals to sustainable development should be taken into account in framing bids along with the other factors described in this guidance. The following checklist provides a brief guide to some key aspects of sustainability in relation to urban regeneration.

6. In developing your proposals, have you considered the opportunities to:

Reclaim and reuse brownfield sites, including derelict and contaminated land, or make use of vacant urban sites?

Locate new developments where they are readily accessible by public transport, cycling or on foot?

Regenerate and enhance existing urban centres by promoting mixed uses which enable people to live near their work and reduce their overall need to travel?

Improve access to public transport networks to discourage dependency on private cars?

Reuse existing buildings and recycle building materials or use local sources of supply?

Set targets for energy efficiency in housing or other types of development, or exploit renewable sources of energy?

Promote community-based initiatives which enable local people to participate in environmental improvements and contribute to their long-term management and maintenance?

Separate or protect residential areas from sources of noise or pollution from traffic or other sources?

Promote greening as an easily-integrated source of economic, environmental, social, educational benefits in infrastructure and development projects?

Source (DETR, 1998h).

Appendix 14: Samples of the TTT Partnership Agency's Definitions/ Strategies for Sustainability

English Nature position statement on sustainable development (April 1999)

"What is sustainable development?
Sustainable development is 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (after Brundtland). It seeks to achieve a better quality of life for everyone, now and in the future, while protecting and where possible enhancing the environment. This requires an integrated approach to deliver social progress and economic growth and maintain the quality of our natural environment."

Source: **http://www.english-nature.org.uk** accessed April 2000

Northumbrian Water Policy for the Environment

"Sustainable Development
These principles are fully consistent with the International Chamber of Commerce Business Charter for Sustainable Development, to which the Company is a signatory. The Company will participate in the promotion of Local Agenda 21 and in the production of Biodiversity Action Plans. It will integrate these into sustainable management of land holdings and into the formulation of environmental objectives and targets."

Source **http://www.nwl.co.uk** accessed April 2000

Groundwork

"Our approach is to develop programmes which link environmental, social and economic regeneration and contribute to sustainable development."

Source **http://www.groundwork.org.uk/about/index.html** accessed April 2000

The Countryside Commission and Rural Development Commission

"Give a lead on decision taking methods that embrace all aspects of sustainable development, for example by developing further the countryside character and environmental capital approaches.

Demonstrate new approaches and share best practice in the sustainable development of rural communities by building a rural development network drawing together practitioners and funders of rural development initiatives."

Source Countryside Commission & Rural Development Commission(1998)

Environment Agency

"the UK government's policy on sustainable development is to balance economic development and environmental protection, to apply several guiding principles, such as precautionary and polluter pays principles, and to develop tools such as natural resource accounting and policy analysis methods in order to determine the most

appropriate action that is needed to contribute to sustainable development."

Source Environment Agency (1996)

National Trust

Position Statement: Sustainable Tourism
"A 'wise' growth strategy for tourism is one which integrates the economic, social and environmental implications of tourism and which spreads the benefits throughout society as widely as possible."[1] The Trust believes that the prime objective of any tourism strategy must be to protect the environment on which tourism depends. If tourism impacts too much on the environment, the visitors can destroy the very thing they are coming to enjoy. Sustainable tourism should also embrace social and economic factors such as visitor satisfaction and enjoyment, benefit to local communities, the protection of living standards and the harnessing of the skills of local people.

Source National Trust (2000)

One NorthEast

"Sustainable development – Achieving sustainable development means pursuing the following objectives at the same time: maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment, social progress, effective protection of the environment and prudent use of natural resources.

We will have developed a 'virtuous circle of sustainable prosperity' – an upward spiral of improvement. The Region will offer businesses a skilled and adaptable workforce and a clean, safe and sustainable environment in which to grow, start or locate 'high value' businesses. This will provide a diverse knowledge driven economy providing well paid jobs. This will create the wealth and opportunity for further social and environmental improvements, which in turn will improve the Region as a place to do business."

Source One NorthEast (1999)

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